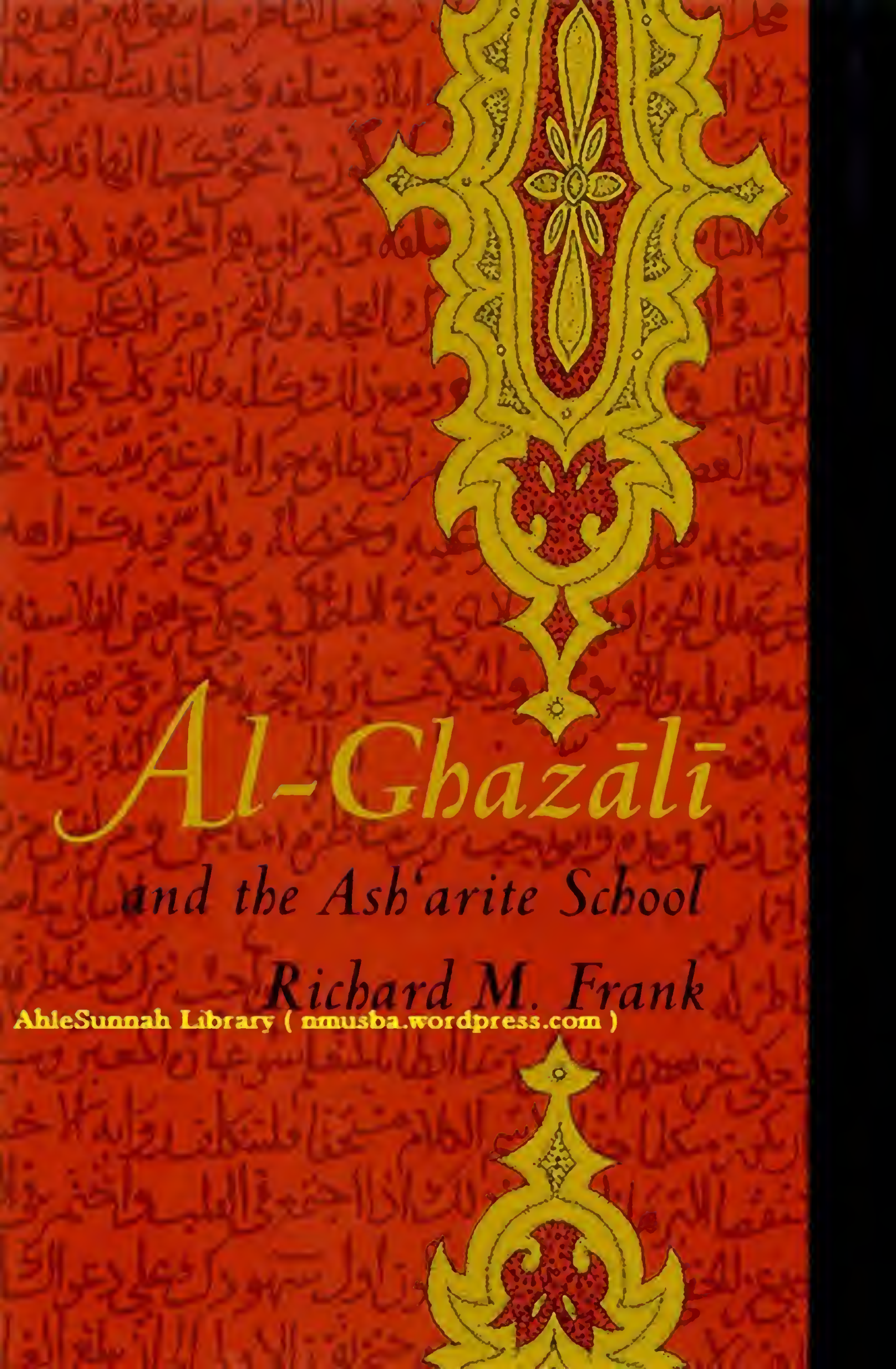
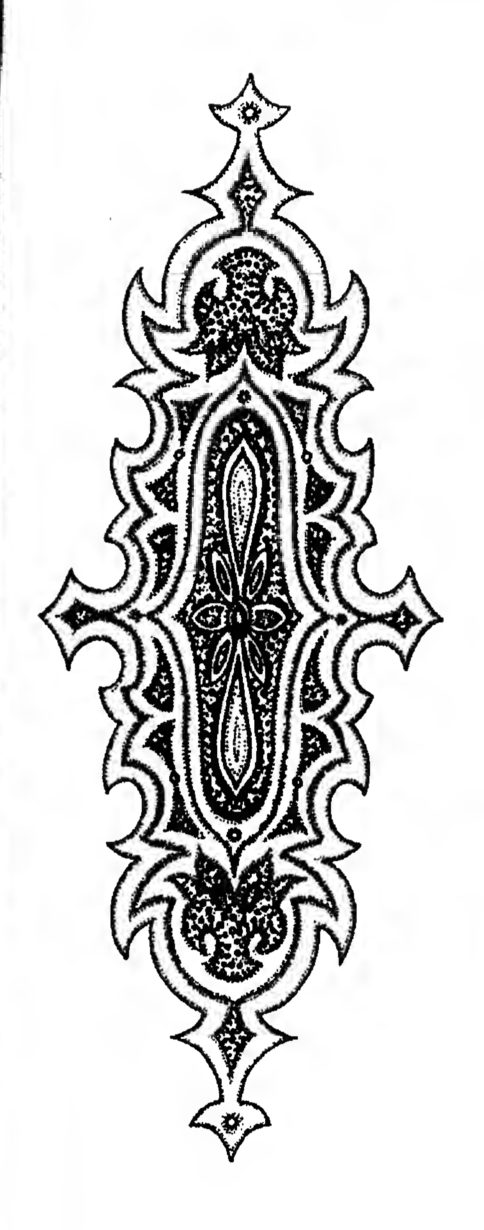
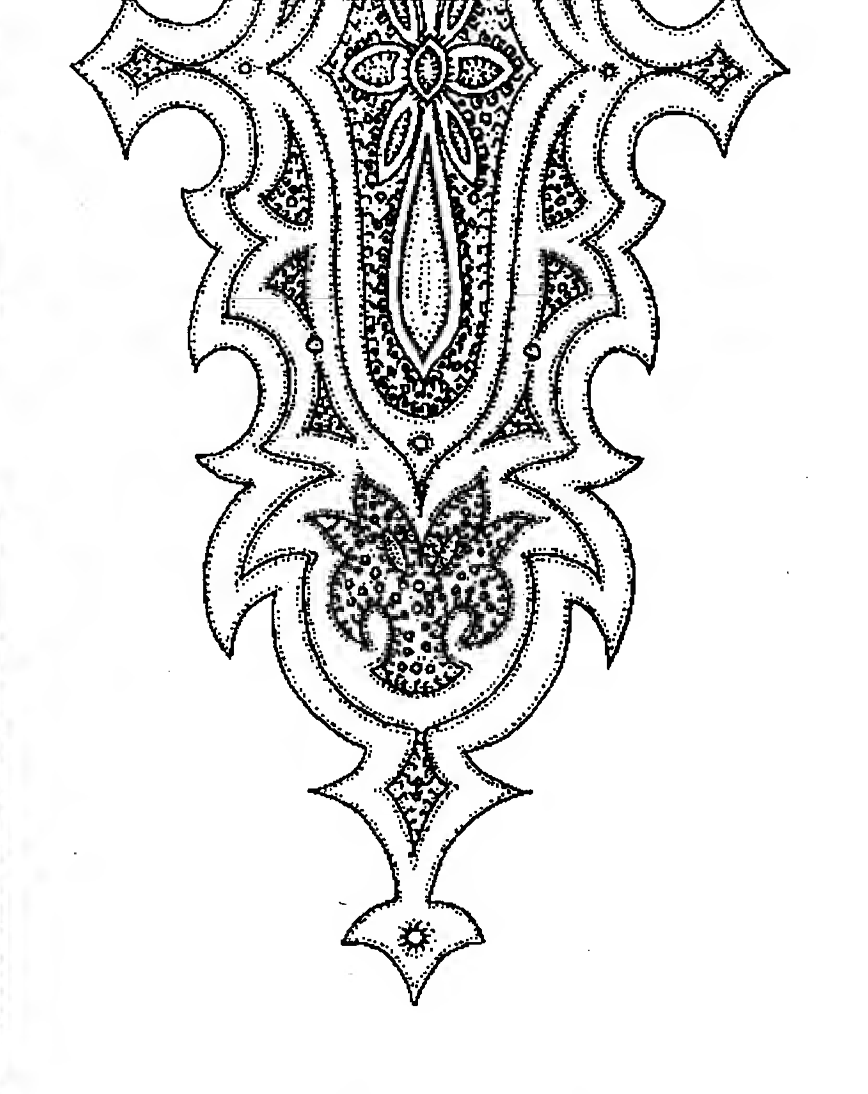

Al-Ghazālī
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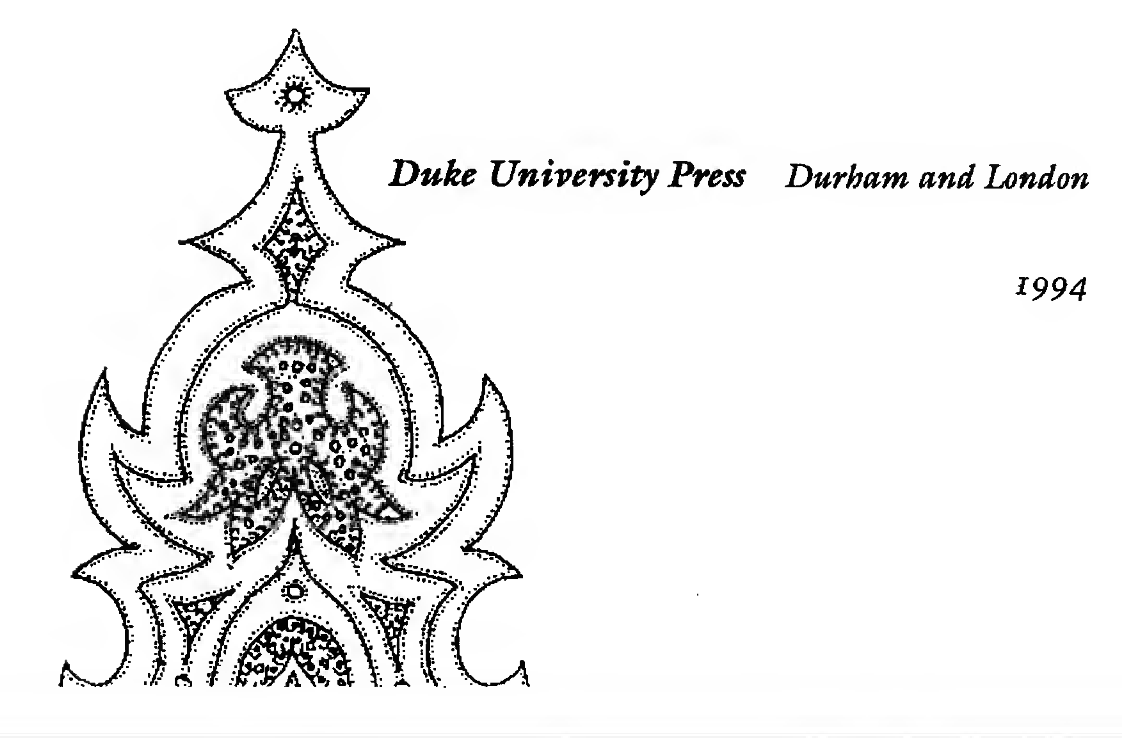
Al-Ghazālī and the Ash'arite School

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Medieval and Renaissance Studies 15



Al-Ghazālī and the Ash'arite School

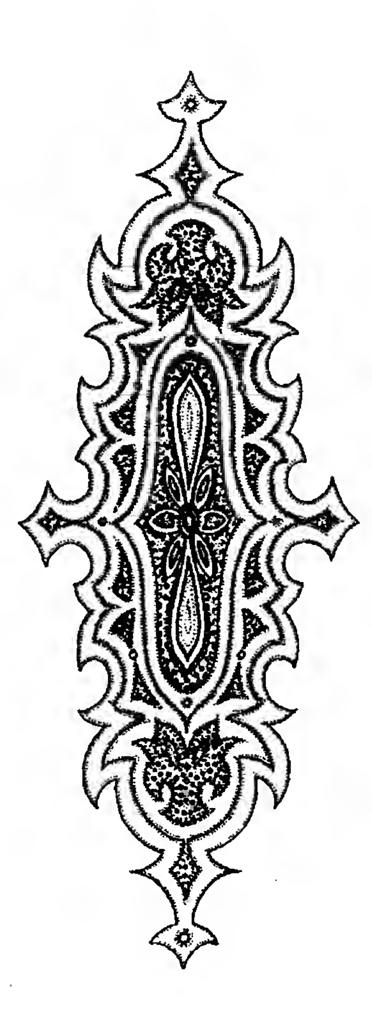
R. M. Frank



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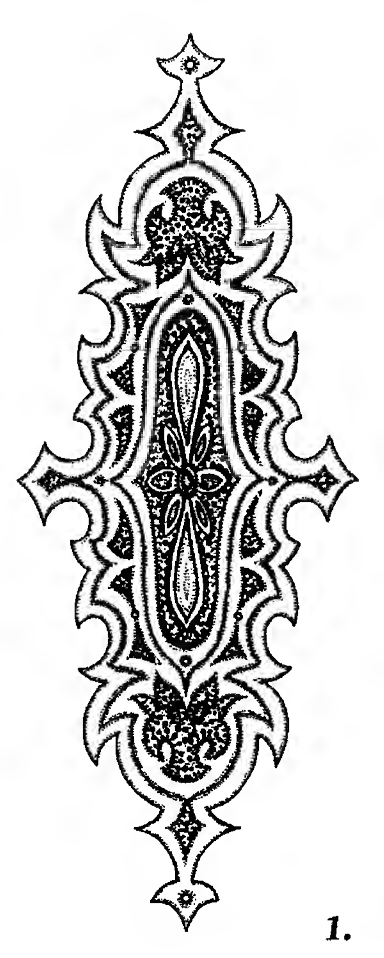


In Memory of

Carol Putnam
(d. April 16, 1993)

and of

Tom Prufer
(d. March 23, 1993)



Contents



Preface

The present study, though from one standpoint long in preparation, came nonetheless forth quite unlooked for. I had long felt that although there had been, and continued to be, much learned talk concerning al-Ghazālī's adaptation and adoption of elements of Aristotelian philosophy—the logic in particular—in such a way as to update and in modest measure to rectify some of the earlier logical, conceptual, and theoretical shortcomings of traditional Muslim theology, there had been all too little thorough and systematic study of the texts with regard to the most significant issues involved. Suggestions and assertions concerning the matter were made with greater assurance than seemed warranted by the foundations on which they rested. The primary focus of my own work was, however, concentrated in classical kalām; al-Ghazālī was therefore of only marginal interest and I had little inclination to take up the question of their relationship. That the relation of his theology to that of traditional Ashʿarism was at least ambiguous and required serious investigation was, however, brought acutely to my attention when, in preparing a

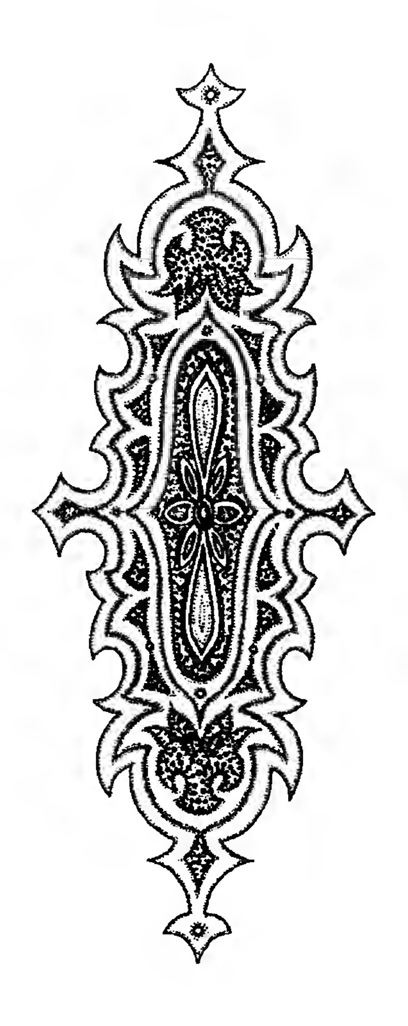
rather general lecture on predestination in Islam for a nearby community college in the spring of 1985, I reread Book XXXV of *Iḥyā᾽ ᶜulūm al-dīn* for the first time in many years. A short time later then, on reading *al-Maqṣad al-asnā* for the first time, it became altogether clear to me that his formal commitment to Ashᶜarite orthodoxy was tenuous in the extreme. Accordingly, for the Paris-Penn-Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on inheritance and borrowing in the middle ages (Héritage et emprunts culturels au Moyen Age) held in Morigny in the fall of 1986, I prepared a paper entitled "Al-Ghazālī's use of Avicenna's Philosophy" as a kind of preliminary study of one major aspect of the question. That was a beginning. Subsequently, in 1988, in the course of preparing a paper entitled "al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*," my attention was drawn to further aspects of the problem of the status and location of al-Ghazālī's theology relative to traditional Ashᶜarism and I decided that the somewhat tentative study done in two years earlier, the likelihood of whose eventual appearance seemed ever more remote,[1] had to be more fully elaborated. With the publication of *Creation and the Cosmic System* in 1992, my interest in al-Ghazālī was waning rapidly. The apparent inconsistency of the things he says explicitly concerning kalām continued, however, to trouble me and, not having examined the data of the texts with this question specifically in mind, I fancied that by making a few appropriate distinctions the matter could be laid quietly to rest on the basis of material already assembled. Alas, things are seldom so simple as they appear at a distance. Al-Ghazālī's explicit statements concerning kalām and his allusions to the Ashᶜarite school proved inevitably to be imbedded in contexts that precluded a simple analysis within the formally restricted framework originally projected. Though the aim of the study remained essentially the same, the questions to be addressed multiplied and the web of their interrelationships became more difficult to map as they spread more widely through the fabric of al-Ghazālī's works. Beneath the surface of an originally rather simple question lay something more serious, and more interesting.

Al-Ghazālī shows himself in his writing to be a very complex and problematic personality, intellectually pompous, yet beset by inner uncertainties and often conspicuously superficial in his treatment of important questions. Unable to achieve complete confidence in the truth of his speculative theories, he turned to sufi asceticism and there found the means of confirming his belief and filling in the gaps through the achievement of non-rational states of mind whose validity as a foundation and verification of conceptual and theoretical propositions he rationalized on the basis of a Neoplatonic paradigm. He was first and ever remained a leading master of Shāfiᶜite law and, though for himself he rejected the traditional Ashᶜarite theology, his bond to the Shāfiᶜite school continued to be of profound personal importance to him throughout his life. Thus it is that the tension which arose from the ambivalence of his relation to the school manifests itself in the variety of ways in which he attempts to mute or to reconcile, to rationalize or to override, the resultant conflict with some of his fellows in most of his major writings.

What we have sought to do in the present study is to trace out and present to view the primary orientation and consistent sense of al-Ghazālī's basic attitude towards the traditional theology of the Ashᶜarite school and its adherents, as in a variety of ways and in various places it rises clearly to view or remains to a greater or lesser extent obscured beneath the surface of his writing. The track offered by the texts is difficult to follow, often circuitous and ambivalent and seldom clear and straightforward. Theological theses that are enunciated are often, and sometimes in very significant respects, presented only in an incomplete or elementary form and from one work or passage to another appear in some instances, on first reading at least, to be irreconcilably opposed. The exact sense and the implications are, in many cases, neither expressly presented nor unambivalently suggested. Whether this is because in a given context he was unwilling to express himself more fully and clearly or because he had not really thought the matter through and was not altogether aware of the importance of some aspects of a particular issue remains unclear, though regarding some questions one suspects that the latter is most likely the case. Founded on a superficial reading of the texts or, in a few instances, simply on the secondary literature, the image of al-Ghazālī that has been presented by some scholars is manifestly idealized, not to say romanticized. However this may be, one thing at least would seem clear beyond doubt: for all his brilliance, al-Ghazālī was not, as a speculative or systematic thinker, in the same league as Avicenna or Aquinas. His primary preoccupations lay elsewhere.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to those who directly or

indirectly contributed to the completion of this little book, especially to my colleague Thérèse-Anne Druart, who read the manuscript very carefully and made a number of helpful suggestions, and also to a number of others who, on various occasions, had the patience to listen as I rehearsed the problems and difficulties I was having in trying to map a coherent and consistent path through the thickets of rhetorical undergrowth that tend so often to obstruct and obscure the uneven terrain of al-Ghazālī's writing, and who commented and in a few cases exclaimed or protested as they remarked on the conspicuously revisionist track of my conclusions. I have also to express my gratitude to Professor Edward Mahoney for his encouragement and support and to the Duke University Press, particularly to the editorial staff for their patience with my sometimes untidy habits and their help in the preparation of the text for publication. Too, I must thank my wife, Jane, for putting up with me through the whole process.



1. Introduction

The Problem

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (450/1058–505/1111) was one of the most renowned and influential writers in the history of Muslim religious thought. He was born in Khorasan, and his early studies were pursued chiefly in Tus, the city of his birth. Later, he studied in Nishapur under abū l-Maᶜālī ᶜAbdallāh al-Juwaynī (419/1028–478/1085), who held the chair of Shāfiᶜite law in the college that had been founded expressly for him by the vizier, Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), who was perhaps the most powerful man of his day. Al-Juwaynī is still esteemed as one of the greatest masters of Shāfiᶜite law, but he was also the leading master of Ashᶜarite kalām. His ***al-Shāmil fī uṣūl al-dīn*** was one of the most detailed and comprehensive summae of Ashᶜarite theology ever written and was sufficiently popular that after his death several abridgements

were produced, two of which have survived.[1] Two of al-Ghazālī's fellow students under al-Juwaynī—abū l-Qāsim al-Anṣārī (d. 504/1110) and al-Kiyā' al-Harāsī (d. 512/1118)—also wrote major compendia of Ash'arite theology. Though the curriculum of the colleges was formally restricted to the religious sciences (and there concentrated primarily on law), intellectual life in the centers of learning was rich and varied and, as was inevitable within the context of the times, the works of the logicians and the falāsifa were, even though rejected or condemned, generally known and read by the leading religious scholars. After the death of al-Juwaynī, al-Ghazālī, an ambitious man, attracted the attention of Niẓām al-Mulk, and in 1091 was named to the chair of Shāfi'ite law in the Niẓāmiyya college of Baghdad. It was while he held this position that he undertook a systematic study of the works and doctrines of the falāsifa, chiefly Avicenna as it would seem, and wrote first a summary of their teaching, ***Maqāṣid al-falāsifah,*** and then a refutation of the theses which he found most seriously in conflict with the tenets of orthodox Islam, ***Tahāfut al-falāsifah,*** together with several other works on logic and ethics. In 1095, however, al-Ghazālī suffered a nervous collapse and, unable to continue teaching, resigned his position and left Baghdad. It is impossible to determine, given the complexity of the situation, exactly what may have precipitated al-Ghazālī's breakdown, if indeed there was a single primary factor, whether it involved the contests for power that characterized the political turmoil of the time or tensions within the religious and academic communities, or was perhaps his inability to resolve certain interior conflicts or doubts, religious and intellectual, within himself. The latter is stressed in his autobiography, but the evidence remains nonetheless ambivalent.

Al-Ghazālī spent the next few years mostly in solitude, cultivating sufi asceticism. He stayed for a time in Damascus and then in Jerusalem, made the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1096, and subsequently traveled widely, visiting Baghdad, Egypt, and Tus as well as other places. It was during this period that he wrote his most important work, ***Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*** (The Revivification of the Religious Sciences), which immediately achieved great notoriety and popularity, even though it was condemned in some circles. In 1106, at the behest of Fakhr al-Mulk, the vizier of the Seljuk ruler of Khorasan, al-Ghazālī took a position at the Niẓāmiyya College of Tus, where he wrote his autobiography, ***al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl,***[2] and completed his last major work, ***al-Mustasfā min 'ilm al-uṣūl.*** Some time later he gave up teaching and retired to Tus, where he died in Jumādā II, 505/ December, 1111.

Al-Ghazālī's opinion concerning the value of kalām and his relation to the traditional Ash'arite theology have been the subject of a good deal of discussion amongst scholars. The most widely held opinion has been that expressed by Gardet and Anawati, namely, that "he retains the central theses of the Ash'arites completely," even though he has made certain emendations in the way they are set forth and reasoned.[3] More recent studies have shown that this is certainly not the case,[4] though the exact nature and configuration of his relation to the Ash'arite school remains problematic. Al-Ghazālī is an extremely complex figure. His writings differ greatly from one another in form and rhetoric as well as in topic and focus and in trying to trace the course of his thought and discern his commitments, one has sometimes the impression of attempting to follow the movements of a chameleon, so varied are the hues and postures he assumes from one place to another.

The general problem of al-Ghazālī's relation to the traditional theology presents itself in two distinct, even if not everywhere separable, facets of his writing. The one, whose evidence is somewhat straightforward, is the diverse and in a few places apparently conflicting statements he makes when speaking explicitly of kalām as the traditional speculative theology of the schools. In virtually every case the kalām with which he is concerned in these passages is that of the Ash'arite school, which he shared with his fellows in the Shāfi'ite tradition. The other is one whose evidence is more difficult to bring forward and analyze and to interpret; it is that of the relationship between the theology of al-Ghazālī and that of the Ash'arite school. One, if not the principal source of the difficulty is that al-Ghazālī wrote a number of very complex works that differ greatly both formally and materially, but never composed a clear, expository summary of his own dogmatic theology. In reflecting on the complexity of the evidence, Marie Bernand speaks of a "fusion of systems,"[5] and one may suggest that it is precisely because al-Ghazālī sought, in his own way, to harmonize a number of very different (and, we should

add, in some cases incompatible) trends and schools of Muslim theological thought that he refrained from setting forth the systematic foundation of this "fusion" plainly and unambivalently.

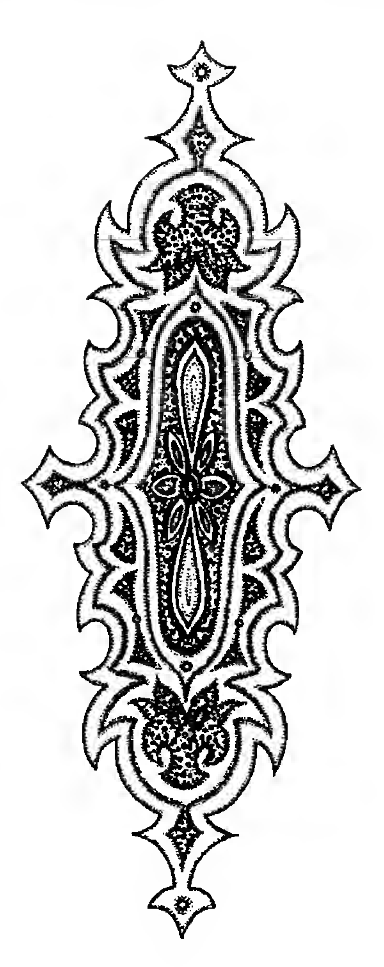
The problem of the relation between al-Ghazālī's theology and that of the Ashʿarite school is manifested in two quite distinct places, the one being his two manuals of ostensibly Ashʿarite theology, *al-Iqtiṣād fī l-iʿtiqād* and *R. al-Qudsiyyah,* the other, the doctrinal statements, direct and indirect, concerning fundamental questions of Muslim theology scattered through his other writings. Al-Ghazālī's own basic theology, his psychology, cosmology, and metaphysics, we cannot and need not take up as such in the present study. We have shown in *Creation and the Cosmic System: al-Ghazālī and Avicenna* that, contrary to common opinion, al-Ghazālī holds (1) that the created universe is a closed, deterministic system of secondary causes whose operation is governed by the first created being, an "angel" (or "intellect") associated with the outermost sphere, (2) that God cannot intervene in the operation of secondary causes, celestial or sublunary, and (3) that it is impossible that God have willed to create a universe in any respect different from this one which He has created. A number of the texts cited and examined in the course of the present study will confirm the various elements of this interpretation of his thought clearly enough as well as Davidson's conclusions concerning his psychology. Taking this as given, then, what we shall do here is first to examine what al-Ghazālī has to say explicitly concerning kalām and its status as one of the religious sciences. Next we shall examine the form and the content of a number of passages of *al-Iqtiṣād fī l-iʿtiqād* and of *R. al-Qudsiyyah* against the background of classical Ashʿarite doctrine and of what al-Ghazālī has to say in other works so as to get a reasonably clear view of what exactly al-Ghazālī says and does not say and what he does and does not commit himself to, either explicitly or implicitly, in these two works. In the case of one or two passages, the discussion is quite extended because of the need to examine a number of other texts in order to supply an adequate context for the understanding of how the topic is presented and treated in variously differing contexts. Following this, we shall examine the evidence supplied by *Fayṣal al-tafriqah* and *Iljām al-ʿawāmm ʿan ʿilm al-kalām* regarding al-Ghazālī's alienation from the Ashʿarite school. The question of al-Ghazālī's relationship to the

Ashʿarite school may appear to have only secondary importance, but when the evidence is gathered and examined it proves, as we shall see, to be a key to certain basic characteristics of the method and language of his writing and thereby to shed light on what might be called the program that governs much of the corpus of his work.

Kalām in the Traditional View

Kalām was commonly termed "the science of the fundamental doctrines of Islam" (*ʿilm uṣūl al-dīn*) and was also referred to as "the speculative science" (*ʿilm al-naẓar*). The Ashʿarite mutakallimūn held that their science, though ultimately guided by the revelation, is formally conceptual, logical, and critical and that it proves the truth of the basic articles of Muslim religious belief without formal appeal to any premise or thesis that is taken from religious belief as such. (A corollary to this thesis is that once it has been rationally demonstrated that Muḥammad was a prophet, assent to what is presented for belief only in the revelation is also rationally justified.) Kalām, in short, is looked on as a rational metaphysics, and the larger compendia are, in fact, topically ordered like works on metaphysics. The distinction between "science" and "opinion" (ἐπιστήμη and δόξα) is made, but theology is not distinguished from philosophy.[6] Consistently with the theses that simple acquiescence to the views of others is not a valid basis for religious belief and that the basic tenets of Islam can be justified by autonomous reason, then, most of the Ashʿarites hold that rational speculation—i.e., some minimal level of rational reflection on the basic truths of the revelation—is required as a foundation of valid religious assent and under the religious law is therefore obligatory for all, though some allow for a conditioned exception in the case of simple, uneducated people. The manuals range from very short, catechetical works meant for elementary religious instruction to extremely long and complex summae in which a panoply of theoretical problems and questions are dealt with in detail. Although a number of religious scholars, including almost all the Ḥanbalites, strongly disapproved of any form of rational or systematic theology as such, the Ashʿarite kalām was

in fact the school theology for both Shāfiʿites and Mālikites. Among al-Ghazālī's immediate predecessors, thus, some of the foremost masters of Shāfiʿite law (e.g., abū Isḥāq al-Shīrāzī [d. 476/1083] and abū l-Maʿālī al-Juwaynī [d. 478/1085]), held, against the Ḥanbalites, that *taqlīd* is not a sound basis for assent to the basic articles of the creed (*al-ʾuṣūl*), and that "rational speculation" concerning the being of God is therefore obligatory, and that, in fact, the first obligation of individuals who have reached the age of reason and are of sound mind is the intention to undertake such inquiry.[7] It is within this general context and against this background, then, that we must examine the diverse statements that al-Ghazālī makes concerning kalām and rational theology and the evidences of his conflict with the school.



2. Al-Ghazālī on the Place of Kalām Amongst the Religious Sciences

Kalām According to the Traditional Classification

Al-Ghazālī insists that those who cling to the truth and follow the Sunna have succeeded in uniting the things entailed by the revealed laws and the things that are demanded by reason (*al-talfīqu bayna muqtaḍayāti l-sharāʾiʿi wa-wājibāti l-ʿuqūl*); there is no inconsistency between strict adherence to the Sunna and the study of rational theology. Against the literalists and those whom he dubs "*al-ḥashwiyya,*" he insists that there is no conflict between the revelation that is handed down in the Muslim community and the truth that is given to reason: *al-sharʿu l-manqūl wal-ḥaqqu l-maʿqūl.*[1] There can be, that is to say, no conflict between the mind's critical, speculative grasp of and assent to what is truly presented in the texts of revelation and taught by the authorities of the first generations of Muslims on the one side and what has been or may be conclu-

sively demonstrated by purely theoretical reasoning concerning the being of God and his attributes and the nature of man and of the world on the other.[2] Those who deny this do so simply because they have weak minds and lack intellectual insight (*min ḍuʿfi l-ʿuqūli wa-qillati l-baṣāʾir*) (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 1, 11). The reports which are cited by the Ḥanbalites and others from authorities of the first generations condemning rational theology are valid only with regard to simple-minded believers who, for whatever reason, are incapable of formal reasoning. It is "inconceivable that any one disagree" with the logical rules set out in *Qisṭās* once he has understood them (*Fayṣal,* p. 48, and *Munqidh,* pp. 123, 13f. and 126, 11ff.). Again, the use of the formal terminology coined by the mutakallimūn, albeit condemned by some, is necessary for conceptual precision and clarity, just as is that of the jurists (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 95, 17ff., and *Iljām,* p. 95, 13f.). Accordingly, al-Ghazālī speaks of having insight into the truth "by means of speculative reasoning, rational inquiry and the correct elaboration of logical demonstrations" (*kashfu dhālika . . . bil-naẓari wal-baḥthi wa-taḥrīri l-ʾadillah*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 15, 12f.). It is possible to achieve a comprehensive and certain rational knowledge of God and of the truth contained in the revelation "through demonstration that has been fully carried out, whose conditions are completely fulfilled, and whose foundations and premises have been reviewed step by step and term by term until there remain no room for ambiguity and no opening for confusion" (*Iljām,* p. 112, 2ff.).

Classifying the religious sciences in *Mustaṣfā,* al-Ghazālī says that kalām is the one that is universal (*al-ʿilmu l-kulliyyu mina l-ʿulūmi l-dīniyyah*) (p. 5, 9). It begins with the inquiry into that which is most universal, viz., being (*al-mawjūd*); considers the two kinds of beings, sc., God, the eternal being, and contingent beings (ibid., pp. 5f.), and then distinguishes the basic classes of the latter, the *jawhar* and accidents,[3] and ultimately demonstrates the basic truths of the revelation and establishes the principles of the other religious sciences (pp. 6f.). The truth of what is taught by the prophets is made known by rational demonstration (*burhān al-ʿaql*) (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 2, 2). As such, therefore, kalām is primary (*al-ʾaṣl*) with respect to the other religious sciences and they are secondary or derivative (*furūʿ*), even though some of them, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), for example, may be more universally useful and, consequently, more essential to the life of the

Muslims individually and collectively (e.g., *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 6f., *Iqtiṣād,* p. 15, 1; *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 17, 26, and p. 18, 8ff.; and *Jawāhir,* p. 22). The formal conception of kalām here, like that of the earlier mutakallimūn, appears to be that of an extended metaphysics. Kalām is the universal religious science, whereas the other religious sciences are particular. Jurisprudence (*al-fiqh*) assumes the truth of the revelation; it begins with the investigation of juridical demonstrations and so depends for its foundation on kalām (*Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 5f.).[4] There are two things here which should be noted, since they will prove later to be of some importance. Formally speaking, the jurist, whether simple faqīh or expert in the foundations of the law (*ʾuṣūlī*), will, in principle, have no authority as such to judge the truth or error of theological statements or of the correctness of theological interpretations (*taʾwīl*) of Koran verses or prophetic Traditions, since such judgments have to be made on theological grounds and their validity has to be justified logically. One notes also that whereas in earlier writings (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, 8f.) al-Ghazālī says that kalām studies the being of God, His attributes, and His actions, he says in *Mustaṣfā* (1, p. 6, 2ff.) that it explains that "God must be one and that He is distinguished from contingent beings by attributes that belong to Him necessarily and by things that are impossible with respect to His being (*ḥaqquhū*) and characteristics that may possibly belong to him, being neither necessary nor impossible and distinguishes between what is necessary, impossible, and possible respecting God's being." Though in this he follows a fairly common formulation,[5] one notes that here al-Ghazālī does not speak explicitly of God's actions. This may be significant, as we shall see. Elsewhere he speaks of kalām and classifies it somewhat differently.

Understood as the science of God's being and His attributes and His actions, kalām is formally a metaphysics. It is thus that al-Ghazālī describes it, for example, in *Iḥyāʾ* (e.g., 1, 23, 8f.). More broadly viewed, however, there are, included within kalām, a number of distinct sciences or disciplines, and accordingly al-Ghazālī says (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 98, 3f.) that in *Iqtiṣād* he had taken up only the basic elements of the Muslim creed (*qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid*) without looking into "the other matters that are studied by the mutakallimūn" (*ghayruhā min mabāḥithi l-mutakallimīn*). The study of the fundamental doctrines of Islam is the rational investigation of God's essence and His attributes

and His actions. It studies the classes of created beings and the various subclasses and orders of accidents and their relation to animate and inanimate beings. This part of kalām corresponds to the metaphysics (*al-ʾilāhiyyāt*) of the falāsifa (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, 8f.). Again, in *Iḥyāʾ* (1, p. 23, 7f.) he says that logic (*al-manṭiq*) is an element of kalām; it is the tool of kalām (*Jawāhir,* p. 21). The discussion of the inference forms and the conditions of their application in the traditional manuals of kalām is commonly placed under a heading of speculative reasoning (*al-naẓar*) or speculative science (*ʿilm al-naẓar*), and accordingly al-Ghazālī says in *Tahāfut* (pp. 15f.) that what the falāsifa call logic (*al-manṭiq*) is what "in kalām we call the book on speculative reasoning" (*kitāb al-naẓar*).

The rules and procedures of formal reasoning, are, he says, in fact, illustrated and taught by the prophets and in the Koran (e.g., *Qisṭās,* pp. 8f. and 27, 5ff., and *Fayṣal,* pp. 49f., with which cp. ibid., pp. 16f. and *Jawāhir,* p. 15, 21, where he mentions disputation, *al-mujādalah*). He cites, moreover, a Tradition according to which the Prophet said, "When men draw near to God by means of various kinds of devotions, then draw you near with your mind (*bil-ʿaql*)," and he goes on to note that "drawing near is not possible either by one's native instincts (*bil-gharīzati l-fiṭriyyah*) or by such knowledge as is given immediately (*bil-ʿulūmi l-ḍarūriyyah*), but rather by that which is gained through rational inference (*bal bil-muktasabah*)" (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 16, 3–5).[6] The failure of formal theological reasoning to benefit some people—many, indeed—cannot be taken as evidence that conceptual understanding (*al-ʿaql*) and rational demonstration (*al-burhān*) have little value in theology, because God does not give "the light of the mind" (*nūr al-ʿaql*) to all, but only to certain individuals (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 10, 12f.; cp. *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 14, 17ff.).

Consistently with this, then, al-Ghazālī says that the truth or falsity of theological propositions may be ascertained by purely speculative reasoning (e.g., *Iqtiṣād,* p. 247, 2f., *Qisṭās,* p. 8, 4ff.; and *Iljām,* p. 112). He says, furthermore, that logic, i.e., rigorous, systematic reasoning, is required in order to clarify the texts of the Koran and the prophetic Traditions, that is, in order to know what is and what is not to be taken literally and, in the case of the latter, what proposed interpretations may be valid or true and which must be false (e.g., *Fayṣal,* pp. 43ff. and 46ff.). Indeed, it is through theoretical reason-

ing that one knows the truth of the revelation (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 2, 2f.), for logic is a measure of the truth of any and all theological propositions (*jamīʿu l-maʿārifi l-ʾilāhiyyah: Qisṭās,* p. 66, 14ff.),[7] "of the knowledge of God (the exalted) and the knowledge of His angels and His scriptures, and His apostles, and of His kingdom and His royal domain" (*Qisṭās,* p. 9, 13f.). Here, the first three terms (God, His angels, and His scriptures) and their order follow a famous Tradition according to which the Prophet said that Belief (*al-ʾīmān*) is "that you believe in God and in His angels, and in His scriptures, the encounter with Him, and His apostles"; the last two ("His kingdom" and "His royal domain") are, in al-Ghazālī's usage, standard expressions for the material or sublunary world and the immaterial or celestial world, respectively. (In the immediate context, this remark is made against the Bāṭiniyya and their claim of the necessity of an infallible imam, but the statement is universally true for al-Ghazālī.) Logic, thus, is said to be a means for the knowledge of God's being, of the celestial intelligences that govern the universe and so mediate between God and the sublunary world, of the nature of the rational soul, and of the truth of the revelation and of its correct interpretation. Reference to the resurrection and judgment is omitted, since this is a future contingent and cannot be known through speculative reasoning. Logic, he says in another context, is the measure for the knowledge of everything that is not simply a matter of legislative enactment (*waḍʿī*) (*Qisṭās,* p. 68, 4ff.).[8]

It is a delusion, however, to think that reason can alone and by itself attain to the fullness of truth, for the guidance of revelation is required.[9] For this, one needs reason and revelation together; the one cannot do without the other (e.g., *Iqtiṣād,* p. 2, 1ff.; *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 16, 27ff.; *Qisṭās,* p. 56; and *Mishkāh,* p. 49). One has the impression that al-Ghazālī's intention here is what we should consider formally to be theology. His understanding of the soul's need for revelation in order to achieve its perfection and ultimate good has several distinct aspects, however. Al-Ghazālī holds that it is possible, in principle, to demonstrate the basic truth of the Muslim revelation concerning God's essence, His attributes, and His acts (i.e., the *tawḥīd:* God's governance of the universe and that His action alone determines the existence of contingent beings and the occurrence of temporal events within the universe) without formal appeal to any axiom or prin-

ciple that derives from religious belief as such. Attempts to follow autonomous reason exclusively, however, inevitably go astray, even with regard to the elementary truths, as is witnessed in the errors of the falāsifa regarding the eternity of the world and God's knowledge of particulars. Moreover, it is impossible by the sole means of rational speculation to know a number of things knowledge of which is of the greatest importance to the soul's achievement of its highest good. Some of these have to do with future contingents; one cannot know by reasoning exactly what happens to the soul after death or what is to the soul's benefit or harm in the next life (*Iljām,* p. 87). Most important to al-Ghazālī's mind, perhaps, is that prophetic revelation is necessary in order to know what actions and activities must be pursued or avoided in order to purify the soul and bring it to perfection (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 16, 23ff., and *Munqidh,* pp. 151f. and 161f.).

Where he speaks specifically of kalām as a science that is required within the Muslim community, al-Ghazālī's perspective is not abstract, but situated within the concrete social, intellectual, and religious context of his own time. Adherence to Islam is assumed as the rule; most people are brought up in Islam and have consequently some level of adherence to it as a norm and some degree of belief, even if by the most naive attachment to the beliefs of others. There is need for and justification of rational inquiry into the truth of the revelation or the significance or meaning of some element of it whenever it appears to be doubtful or unclear. It is for this reason that in a number of important contexts in which al-Ghazālī discusses kalām explicitly he speaks of it primarily as apologetic. Thus he says in one place that "the one benefit of kalām is to protect the faith (*ḥirāsatu l-ʿaqīdah*) . . . and to preserve it by means of all sorts of arguments against the confusions sown by heretics."[10] It serves to confirm and to reinforce belief (*taʾkīd al-iʿtiqād*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 241f.). Where there is little heresy kalām is not much needed and it is adequate to teach a manual such as his own *Qudsiyya* to young people (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 98, 34f.). Against the assertion of some who cite the authorities of the first generations in order to condemn the practice of kalām as itself heretical, he replies that in the early period of Islam, when heresies were neither many nor strong, there was scant need for kalām, but in view of the wide diffusion of serious heresy it subsequently became, and remains, a necessity for the community so that its cultivation

by scholars who are specialists is an obligation of the community (*farḍu kifāyah*).[11] God caused the rise of kalām for the good of the community (*Munqidh,* p. 92). Here, kalām is portrayed as a formal, religious science or discipline in the public role by filling which it serves the religious community as such, not as the private, speculative activity carried out by individuals in quest of greater religious insight and understanding. It is in this public aspect that al-Ghazālī views kalām in contexts where he speaks of it explicitly by this designation, that is, as the discipline commonly taught in the schools as the basic theological science. That some aspects of the way it is taught in the schools may not, in al-Ghazālī's opinion, well serve the valid and necessary function of kalām does not vitiate its legitimacy as one of the religious sciences needed by the community.

To some classes of people kalām is normally harmful. Questions concerning the truth of the revelation and the meaning of the various articles of faith do not naturally arise for simple people; they are intellectually incapable of forming, understanding, and dealing with theoretical concepts and therefore should under no circumstances be exposed to theological problems of any kind (e.g., *Iljām,* pp. 114f.). For such people, kalām, the "demon of dialectic," is an evil, since it can only result in confusion and doubt (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 97f., *Iqtiṣād,* pp. 9f., *Qisṭās,* pp. 47f. and *Fayṣal,* pp. 69f.). Where there are no genuine doubts or questions, kalām is forbidden (*Fayṣal,* p. 79, 1ff.).

So also the theological disputation practiced in the schools is most likely to have a deleterious effect on people who are solidly committed to some particular form of unbelief or heresy, since under the pressure of counterarguments they are more likely to become even more obstinate in their position than to alter it (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 41, 4ff., and p. 97, 3f. and 18ff.; *Iqtiṣād,* p. 10; and *Fayṣal,* p. 70, 2ff.). In *Iḥyāʾ* (1, pp. 40f. and 4, pp. 241f.) he cites his own *Iqtiṣād* as a compendium (*mukhtaṣar*) in which there is an appropriate amount and level of disputation against heretics and of counterargument to their heresy (*munāẓaratu l-mubtadiʿi wa-muʿāraḍatu bidʿatihī*).

There are other people, however, whose questions have to be dealt with and resolved by formal theological reasoning. These are individuals who are endowed with superior mental and intellectual abilities (*al-dhakāʾu wal-fiṭnah*) and "to whom questions and doubts (*shubah* and *shukūk*) occur, either from things that others say or by

nature," that is, because they are naturally disposed to have inquiring minds (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 16, 8ff., and p. 98, 26f. and *Iqtiṣād,* p. 11). Their pursuit of theoretically grounded knowledge and understanding (*al-baḥth*) must be carried as far as is required in order to resolve their questions (e.g., *Iqtiṣād,* p. 11, and *Fayṣal,* p. 48, 3–6). The higher the individual's intellectual insight, the greater need he has for formal analysis and understanding and the further he will have, therefore, to pursue his course in speculative theology. This is important, for when al-Ghazālī speaks of individuals to whom doubts and questions occur "by nature" (*bil-ṭabʿ*) as well as because of things they have heard (*bil-samāʿ*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 16, 12f.), there can be little doubt that he includes himself among them and it is thus that he speaks of the benefit he gained from kalām at the outset (*Munqidh,* p. 77, 9, and p. 91), even though he would later go beyond it to a higher theology. When he says (*Mustaẓhirī,* p. 87, 1f.) that one cannot acquire the discipline of rigorous theological reasoning by himself but must have a teacher, al-Ghazālī explicitly recognizes the importance of the schools. He views the matter consistently within the social context.

Following the tradition of the Ashʿarites, al-Ghazālī insists on the rightness of taking a middle path between the rational reductionism of the falāsifa and the Muʿtazila on the one extreme, and on the other of the simpletons (*al-ḥashwiyyah*) who think that one is formally obliged to hold rigidly to an uncritical acceptance of traditional authority and to adhere to a strictly literalist reading of all the theological statements of the Koran and the Sunna (*Iqtiṣād,* pp. 1–3 and 250f.).[12] He states explicitly, in fact, that the Ashʿarite school adheres to this middle path with regard to the rational interpretation of problematic descriptions of God (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 103f.; cp. *Fayṣal,* pp. 44f.), though he carefully avoids identifying his own doctrine with that of any school.[13]

Regarding the kalām of the schools, which he frequently identifies, and not altogether unreasonably, with the formal disputations that were a central element of the scholars' academic activity, al-Ghazālī has, however, a number of very negative things to say. His polemic against the schoolmen is, in fact, often quite harsh. Most of this centers upon the kind of disputation that was favored in the schools and the cultivation of which was considered by many to be the highest scientific religious activity (cf., e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 80, 13f. and *Fayṣal,* p. 70, 2ff.). Only individuals of genuinely superior intelligence are capable of serious theological reasoning. The fact is, however, that the schoolmen are largely unable to distinguish between skill in disputation and true knowledge and insight.[14] The kind of disputation (*munāẓarah, mujādalah, jidāl*) normally carried on in the schools al-Ghazālī condemns as rude, unseemly, and detrimental to individuals of lesser intelligence (e.g., *Qisṭās,* pp. 5ff.) and also as raising for less-intelligent individuals questions that they cannot deal with (*ibid.,* pp. 79ff.). Though there is a good form of dialectical argumentation (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 95f., *Jawāhir,* p. 21, and *Iljām,* p. 95), disputation is generally bad (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 43ff.). Thus, he says, that disputation which goes beyond what is in the Koran and the Traditions is to be regarded as blameworthy (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 22, 29f., 96f., and *Iljām,* p. 95, 7f.). Much of it is concerned with searching out inconsistencies in particular school doctrines (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 20, 30ff., and *Munqidh,* p. 92, 11f.) and has the effect of producing irrationally partisan attachment to the doctrines of one's own school or master (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 97, 3, and *Fayṣal,* pp. 11ff.), with the result that even scholars who have somewhat superior minds are corrupted by a commitment to the tradition of their schools and an uncritical attachment to the teaching of their masters (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 79–80, and *Qisṭās,* p. 80). Furthermore, dialectical argumentation, however well accomplished, has little efficacy in bringing an erring or heretical opponent to alter his views; quite the contrary, in fact (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 41, 3f. and pp. 96f.). For his condemnation of dialectical disputation there are precedents in the sufi tradition. Maʿrūf al-Karkhī (d. 200/815), for example, is reported to have said, "When God wishes good to a man He opens to him the gate of action (*al-ʿamal*); when God wishes ill to a man He opens to him the gate of dialectic (*al-jadal*)."[15]

Essential Natures, Logic, and the Lawfulness of Secondary Causes

Because of what he regards as the intellectual shortcomings of most of the professional theologians, al-Ghazālī is consistently at pains to set himself above the theology of the schools. Though some think that insight into the true natures of things (*kashfu*

ḥaqāʾiqi l-ʾumūr) may be sought in the kalām of the schools, it contains nothing beyond the elementary teachings of the Koran, the Traditions, and the religious authorities of the first generations which it is meant to defend (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 40f. and cp. p. 22, 28ff.). Again, although the schoolmen believe that "true intellectual insight into essential realities and knowledge of them as they really are" (*kashfu l-ḥaqāʾiqi wa-maʿrifatuhā ʿalā mā hiya ʿalayhī*) are to be achieved by means of the dialectic of the mutakallimūn, it proves more often to be, in fact, misleading because of the way they employ it in purely partisan disputation. This is not to say that kalām offers no genuine intellectual insight, knowledge, and clarity (*kashfun wa-taʿrīfun wa-ʾīḍāḥ*) at all, but it does so rarely and then only with regard to things that are immediately clear and virtually self-evident (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 97, 8–14). In order to gain "true intellectual insight into the essential natures of things and to know beings as they really are and to grasp the real truths that are presented in the Muslim creed" (*kashfu l-ḥaqāʾiqi wa-maʿrifatu l-ʾashyāʾi wa-darku l-ʾasrāri l-latī yatarjimuhā hādhihi l-ʿaqīdah*), one has to stay clear of academic disputation (*al-mujādalah*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 99, 3ff.). Al-Ghazālī's reiterated insistence on "*al-ḥaqīqah, al-ḥaqāʾiq*," here and elsewhere, is both conspicuous and significant. In this we have a characteristic instance of al-Ghazālī's use of language, for while the expression is common in sufi usage to refer to the intimate presence of God which one seeks to perceive beyond the manifest surface of the material appearances of things and events (cf., e.g., *Ṭawāsīn,* §II, 1, p. 194; Sulamī, pp. 430, 7f., 436, 5f., and 484, 5; *Laṭāʾif* 6, p. 194, 10f., *ad* Q18,21), in al-Ghazālī's usage one inevitably hears with this the essences or essential natures of things as integral elements in the lawful and systematic operation of the universe.

Even apart from the vices of the schools' concentration on disputation, however, al-Ghazālī considers the reasoning of kalām as such to be merely dialectical (*ʾadillatun jadaliyyatun kalāmiyyah*) (*Maqṣad,* p. 43, 6). It is based on impressions acquired in ordinary experience and founded on things that are granted and assented to because they are well known amongst the leading scholars (*al-ʾadillatu l-wahmiyyatu l-kalāmiyyatu l-mabniyyatu ʿalā ʾumūrin musallamatin muṣaddaqin bihā li-shtihārihā bayna ʾakābiri l-ʿulamāʾ*) (*Iljām,* p. 112, 8f.).[16] Those demonstrations found in kalām that are really useful are,

he says, basically contained in the Koran and the Traditions (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 22, 28ff.); they are simple and immediately understood without recourse to formal analysis (*ibid.,* p. 98, 31ff.). The arguments, in effect, rest upon premises that are granted either as given in the school tradition or by the consensus of the Muslim community or are simply accepted on the authority of the Koran and the Traditions (*Munqidh,* p. 92, 9–11). It is for this reason, according to al-Ghazālī, sc., because it employs mere endoxa (*mashhūrāt*) as premises (e.g., *Miḥakk,* pp. 66f. and 71), that the reasoning of kalām is formally dialectical and that it cannot yield true intellectual insight or knowledge of the essential natures of things as they really are in themselves.[17] Such knowledge, he holds, is achieved not through dialectical reasoning and disputation but through logical demonstration all the formal conditions of whose validity have been fulfilled (*Iljām,* p. 112, 3ff.; translated on p. 8 above). Such demonstration is carried out on premises which are founded in one of five sources (*ʾuṣūl*) whose truth is known conclusively: "(1) sense perception, (2) experience, (3) universal report, (4) immediate intuition, or (5) as a conclusion drawn on the basis of principles (1)–(4) (*ʾimmā bil-ḥissi wa-ʾimmā bil-tajribati wa-ʾimmā bil-tawāturi l-kāmili ʾaw-bi-ʾawwali l-ʾaqli ʾaw-bil-istintāji min hādhihi l-jumlah*) (*Qisṭās,* p. 60). These five sources are mentioned in *Munqidh* (p. 123, citing *Qisṭās*) where, also following *Qisṭās* (p. 68), he says that the five are presented as such in the Koran. One notes that the list given here seems to follow Avicenna.[18] Consistently with this, in the preface to *Maqṣad* al-Ghazālī vehemently rejects the conceptual and analytic tradition of kalām in favor of that of the falāsifa.[19]

The question has been raised as to how al-Ghazālī can claim adherence to the Aristotelian logic and how he can hold that the experience of the consistent sequential relationships between entities and events can be said to constitute a valid basis for justified premises in demonstrative syllogisms if he follows the Ashʿarite doctrine according to which efficient causality is not attributed to things in virtue of their natures as such. His constant insistence on the importance of knowing the true natures or essences of things (*ḥaqāʾiq al-ʾashyāʾ*) is conspicuous enough. But does he follow the tradition of the Ashʿarite school regarding natures and causation? The matter is discussed in *Miʿyār* in a passage (pp. 109f.) which may be taken as an

example of the rhetorical maneuvers al-Ghazālī sometimes performs when, for one reason or another, he feels obliged to address this issue explicitly.[20] To illustrate the kind of certain knowledge which may be gained by experience, al-Ghazālī, like Avicenna, often offers the example of medicine, that is, of the consistent effects of the specific properties (*khawāṣṣ*) of herbs, drugs, and the like.[21] These are things that happen in most cases (*ʿalā l-ʾakthar*) but not always and under all circumstances (*Miḥakk*, p. 61). In *Miḥakk* (pp. 59ff.) and in *Mustaṣfā* (1, pp. 45f.) he lists a number of causal effects that are known by experience, among them a fire's causing combustion, its rising upwards, eating's causing satiety, the inebriating effects of wine, the laxative effects of scammony, and the magnet's attraction of iron, things knowledge of which has to be founded in experience, since the judgment is general (*qaḍiyyatun ʿāmmah*) and what is given to sense as such is merely the particular instance of an event.[22] In this context he says (*Miḥakk*, p. 80, 6–7=*Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 54, 14) that causes and effects (*ʿillah* and *maʿlūl*, *sabab* and *musabbab*, and *mūjib* and *mūjab*) are concomitant one to the other (*yatalāzamān*).[23] When, however, the question is raised in *Miʿyār* (p. 109, 21ff.) concerning the denial of efficient causality by the mutakallimūn, he does not take up the example of the properties of drugs and herbs, but gives several other examples of manifestly causal sequences (decapitation and death, eating and satiety, fire and burning) for discussion of which the reader is referred to *Tahāfut*. Here, in *Miʿyār*, he limits himself to noting that the relation between decapitation and death is an instance of an event in which the invariant relationship between the antecedent and the consequent is universally known through experience; and he goes on to say that the question of whether the connection between the two events is something necessary and whose alteration, therefore, is impossible absolutely (*ḍarūriyyun wa-laysa fī l-ʾimkāni taghyīruhū*), or whether the connection between the two is simply "the normal course of God's custom (*jarayānu sunnati llāh*) through the efficacy of His eternal will, which is not subject to substitution and alteration" (*lā taḥtamilu l-tabdīla wal-taghyīr*), does not concern the consistency of the connection between the two events, but rather the way in which they are connected. The invariance of the relationship in the example and the causal relationship when, in other cases, the effect usually, but not always, follows the antecedent event are not

in question here. For al-Ghazālī, possibility as "to be in possibility" (*fī l-ʾimkān*) is absolute possibility and so has to do with the possibles as essential natures and with what is necessary, possible, and impossible with regard to their instances.[24] The statement concerning God's "custom" alludes to Q35,43: *lan tajida li-sunnati llāhi tabdīlan fa-lan tajida li-sunnati llāhi taḥwīlā*. God's invariant "custom" involves what, absolutely speaking, could be otherwise: what hypothetically God could have willed to be otherwise but which, being in fact so willed, is necessarily invariant or, depending on other factors, happens for the most part as is lawfully determined by the particular circumstances. In either case, the invariance of the connection between decapitation and death is inevitable, and the empirically founded judgment that this is always (and necessarily) the case, is fully justified. Here, in *Miʿyār*, al-Ghazālī does not give any clear explanation of what exactly is meant by "the normal course of God's custom," and he gives no indication of what it means to say that it is not subject to substitution or alteration (*al-tabdīlu wal-taghyīr*); nor, finally, does he say on which of the two alternatives the observed invariance of the connection is based. Rhetorically, he addresses the reader in the traditional Ashʿarite language about the consistency of events in accord with God's custom while saying that, given the fact of the invariability of the relationship, there is no need to pursue the matter further in this context. The relation of the head to the living body, however, is something that has a special interest for al-Ghazālī. There is nothing in the sublunary world, he says (*Jawāhir*, p. 28), that does not have its analogue in the celestial world. It is thus according to al-Ghazālī that the soul governs the body as God governs the universe (cf. *Miḥakk*, p. 136, 5, translated on p. 60 below; and cp. *Mishkāh*, p. 44, 10ff.). So in *Iljām* (p. 68f.) he offers the relationship between the brain and the rest of the body as an analogue to the relation of the outermost sphere to the rest of the created universe,[25] and there states his position clearly and unambiguously: the soul governs the body through the brain and although it is possible absolutely that man have been created such that it govern the body in some other way, what God wills He wills eternally and necessarily. It is de facto impossible that God have willed that the soul be related to the body in any other way, wherefore man is, in effect, so constituted that it is impossible that the soul govern the body other than through the

instrumentality of the brain. Here (*Iljām,* p. 69, 6), al-Ghazālī cites *Fāṭir* (v. 43) verbatim in confirmation of his thesis: "you shall never find any substitution in the custom of God." Returning to *Miʿyār,* then, not only is it al-Ghazālī's position that decapitation necessarily results in the separation of the soul from the body, but also that it is not possible that God have willed that this not be the case, wherefore it is not possible either that He intervene in the natural order so as to interrupt this sequence of events. That al-Ghazālī should choose to focus on the example of decapitation is interesting, since, of the three examples of causal connections that are mentioned here in *Miʿyār,* it is the only one in which, according to both al-Ghazālī and the falāsifa, the effect must inevitably follow the cause. In the language of "conditions" which al-Ghazālī sometimes employs in speaking of causes and causation, one would say that with the separation of the head from the body one of the necessary conditions for the soul's continued governance of the body is no longer present.[26] Note that where traditional Ashʿarite language will speak of the miracle as a break or an interruption of God's habit or custom (*kharqu l-ʿādah:* e.g., *Tamhīd,* p. 157, 11, and *Shāmil* [81], pp. 96f.; *inkhirāqu l-ʿādah:* e.g., al-Isfarāʾīnī, Fr. 103, and *Irshād,* p. 314, 11; *naqḍu l-ʿādah:* e.g., *Mujarrad,* p. 134, 8, and *Shāmil* [69], p. 134, 8), al-Ghazālī does not. He says, rather, that the custom is invariant, without alteration or change, since, following Avicenna, he conceives the miracle as the result of an unusual, a unique or anomalous conjunction of secondary causes. Cause and effect are related as concomittants and this is referred to in terms of the consistency of customs (*iṭṭirād al-ʿādāt*).[27] In *Miʿyār* (p. 109, 6) the phrase "is not subject to substitution or alteration" explicitly qualifies "God's eternal will," but through the manifest allusion to Q35,43 the qualification is plainly extended to the "custom" which necessarily ensues from God's "eternal and necessary will" (*Iljām,* p. 69, 7). Though al-Ghazālī nowhere says outright that God cannot intervene in the operation of secondary causes, this is plainly implied by his asserting, for example, that there is "in possibility" no better and more perfect universe (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 252, 29ff.), and that if its order (*tartīb*) were altered, then the whole system would be vitiated (*Maqṣad,* p. 81, 17f.), wherefore if any given evil that occurs were to be removed, "then the good that it entails would be done away with . . . and far worse evil would occur" (*ibid.,* p. 68, 7ff., on which see *Creation and the Cosmic System,* pp. 60f.). What are commonly spoken of as "causes" (*ʾasbāb*) al-Ghazālī occasionally describes as the "conditions" of the effect (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 86f. and 249) and he states that God cannot create anything the conditions of whose existence are not fulfilled (ibid. and *Maqṣad,* p. 125). It is for this reason that there can be "no substitution in God's custom," no interruption, that is, in the lawful operation of secondary causes.

The formal lexicon of al-Ghazālī's writing is very fluid, as for any given term or concept he commonly employs a number of expressions, often in order to avoid associating a given assertion, thesis, or argument with the particular school or tradition with which particular expressions may be closely identified. So for logic and for formal, systematic or speculative reasoning, there are a number of terms which he commonly prefers to use in lieu of '*manṭiq,*' particularly in more formally religious contexts, in order to avoid associating his own teaching explicitly with that of pagan antiquity and of the falāsifa. In some places he uses expressions commonly found in traditional kalām, such as "the method of drawing inferences": '*ṭarīq al-istidlāl*' (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 17, 28) and '*ṭarīq al-iktisāb*' (*ibid.,* line 29).[28] Elsewhere, he employs "the (right) balance": "*al-qisṭās (al-mustaqīm)*" (e.g., *Miʿyār,* p. 24, 6; *Munqidh,* p. 123, 10; and *Qisṭās* and *Fayṣal,* passim), and "*al-mīzān*" (*ibid.*),[29] or simply "the ways/means of systematic reflection": "*ṭuruq al-iʿtibār*" (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 13, 23, and 4, p. 478, 1), "*minhāj al-iʿtibār*" (*Fayṣal,* p. 488, 3–4) and "*manāhiju l-baḥthi wal-naẓar*" (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 2, 1). Whatever the expression employed, when al-Ghazālī speaks of formal, speculative reasoning (*al-naẓar, al-iʿtibār,* etc.), he means what Avicenna and the falāsifa call "demonstrative reasoning"; he assumes the Aristotelian logic together with Avicenna's epistemology and the primary elements of the ontology which are associated with it.[30] Though his language may vary according to context, al-Ghazālī's intention remains constant. Kalām, that is, the common theology as taught in the schools, is essentially dialectical in its reasoning, and its arguments are founded on those of the Koran, which are directed towards simple people, while the "balance" of truly demonstrative reasoning, which gives "genuine insight into the true realities of things," is for the intellectual elite (*Qisṭās,* pp. 79f.)[31] who are capable of a higher theology

which he refers to consistently as "*ʿilm al-mukāshafah,*" i.e., that in which true insight into the essential natures of things and the universe and into God's being as creator of every contingent entity and event, i.e., true *tawḥīd,* is attained.

Kalām in the Classification of the Religious Sciences in Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn

In *Iḥyāʾ,* al-Ghazālī presents two distinctly different classifications of the sciences, the first in Book I (*K. al-ʿIlm*) and the second in Book XXI (*K. ʿAjāʾib al-qalb*). In neither, however, does his account of the place and role of kalām among the religious sciences correspond to what we find in *al-Mustasfā.* In *K. al-ʿIlm,* under the heading of sciences which are necessary for the community (*farḍ kifāyah*) but not for each individual (pp. 17ff.), he distinguishes nonreligious sciences from the religious sciences and, within the latter class, those whose aim is the good of this life from those whose aim is the good of the next life. Fiqh he places in the former category, and in the latter he mentions "the science of the states of the soul and its moral characteristics, good and bad" (*ʿilmu ʾaḥwāli l-qalbi wa-ʾakhlāqihā l-maḥmūdati wal-madhmūmah*), which, he notes (p. 17, 27ff.), forms the topic of the second half of *Iḥyāʾ.*[32] Though dealing in part with moral actions, the science of the soul does not fall under the direction of the faqīh (p. 19, 3ff.). Subsequently, in offering a more detailed account of the sciences whose aim is the good of the next life, he names two (p. 20, 18f), sc., *ʿilm al-mukāshafah* and *ʿilmu l-muʿāmalah.* The latter he identifies with the science of the states of the soul (p. 21, 19ff.); it is the higher ethical science through which the soul seeks its ultimate perfection.[33] The former is the higher theology which embraces the knowledge of the celestial realm, its governance of the material, sublunary world and its role in accomplishing the perfection of the human soul; he says (p. 20, 19) that it is "the science of what is hidden and this is the ultimate of the sciences" (*ʿilmu l-bāṭin, wa-huwa ghāyatu l-ʿulūm),* and goes on (pp. 20f.) to say that it is

> an expression which refers to a light that appears in the soul when it is cleansed and purified of its bad characteristics (*ṣifātuhā l-madhmūmah*) and from this light many things are revealed (*yankashif*) . . . to the point that one achieves the true knowledge (*maʿrifah*) of God's being and of His enduring and perfect attributes and His judgement in creating this world and the next world and the way that He ordered the next world to this world and the knowledge (*maʿrifah*) of the word 'angels' . . . and how the angel becomes manifest to prophets and how revelation reaches them and the knowledge (*maʿrifah*) of the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and how the hosts of angels and devils meet there in conflict . . . and what it means to encounter God (the Mighty, the Glorious) and to look at His gracious face and what it means to be near Him and to stop in his proximity and what it means to attain blessedness (*ḥuṣūlu l-saʿādah*) through the companionship of the High Council and the company of the angels and the prophets (*bi-murāfaqati l-malaʾi l-ʾaʿlā wa-muqāranti l-malāʾikati wal-ʾanbiyāʾ*) . . . .[34]

To have this science is to have the authentic knowledge of God's uniqueness as creator, the highest *tawḥīd,* which is the foundation of authentic trust in God (*tawakkul*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 241f.).

In his classification of the sciences in *K. al-ʿIlm* it is only after he has described this higher metaphysics with its integrated psychology and cosmology that al-Ghazālī raises the question of kalām, and then rhetorically as if in a kind of appendix to the primary topic. Why, he asks, have kalām and falsafa been omitted from this classification of the sciences and distinction of those that are good from those that are bad (*faʾin qulta lima . . . ?*) (p. 22, 18f.)? In response, he says (pp. 22f.) that though it is one of the things which are necessary to the community, kalām has only restricted value and legitimacy, something which he will discuss later. Falsafa is set aside (p. 23, 3ff.) as a mix of disparate sciences, the most important of which, sc., logic and metaphysics, are also elements of kalām.[35] The true metaphysical science, *ʿilm al-mukāshafah,* cannot be attained through kalām (p. 21, 19f.). And al-Ghazālī goes on then to say (p. 23, 29ff.) that even though the religious scholars, the mutakallimūn and the fuqahāʾ, may be famous for their learning and are considered by some to be the most excellent of mankind (*ʾafḍalu l-khalq*), the Companions, who

pursued not law and kalām, but "the science of the next life and of the way to get there" (*ʿilmu l-ʾākhirati wa-sulūki ṭarīqihā*), are universally recognized as being superior. What he does, in effect, is to claim the authority of the Companions for the superiority of his own higher ethics and metaphysics and concomitantly, by implication, their greater authority and their intrinsic priority with respect to the principal sciences of the religious scholars.[36] It is important to note that within this scheme fiqh falls outside (and below) the *ʿilm al-muʿāmalah,* even though it is essential to the life of the individual and the community and is also propaedeutic to the soul's achievement of higher perfection. Similarly, kalām falls outside and below the *ʿilm al-mukāshafah,* but though it may be one of the disciplines that are necessary to the community (*min jumlati l-ṣināʿāti l-wājibati ʿalā l-kifāyah*) (p. 23, 16f.), its utility is restricted and its intrinsic value somewhat questionable.

In *ʿAjāʾib al-qalb,* then, al-Ghazālī presents another classification of the sciences, this time on the basis of their relation to the states of the soul. Here (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, pp. 15ff.), he classes the sciences generally as rational (*al-ʿulūm al-ʿaqliyyah*), i.e., those which cannot be acquired on the sole basis of authority or transmitted report (*bil-taqlīd wal-samāʿ*) (pp. 15, 31, and 16, 17ff.), and the specifically religious sciences, i.e., those which have their source and foundation in the revelation (*al-ʿulūm al-sharʿiyyah, al-ʿulūm al-dīniyyah*). In this context al-Ghazālī classes the science of the states of the soul and "the science of God and of his attributes and actions" as rational sciences (*ʿilmun ʿaqlī*), and as sciences which are, moreover, concerned with the next world (*ʿilmun ʾukhrawī*) (p. 17, 10). The latter is clearly to be identified with higher metaphysics (*ʿilm al-mukāshafah*).

In *ʿAjāʾib al-qalb* logic and formal reasoning are discussed in a fundamentally theological context that is larded with Koran verses and Traditions and are placed within a significantly broader horizon than in *Miʿyār, Miḥakk, Qisṭās,* and *Fayṣal*. Here, having taken some time to explain how, according to one acception, 'heart' (*al-qalb*), 'spirit' (*al-rūḥ*), 'soul' (*al-nafs*), and 'intellect/mind' (*al-ʿaql*) are employed synonymously (p. 3, 10ff.; cp. *ibid.* 1, p. 88, 28ff., and *Mishkāh,* p. 43, 15f.), he goes on to take up how the "heart", sc., the soul, is the locus of cognition (*maḥall al-ʿilm*), and states that every intelligible (*kullu maʿlūm*) has an essence (*ḥaqīqah*) and that this essence has a

form (*ṣūrah*) which is impressed in the soul (p. 12, 15f.; cp. *Maqṣad,* p. 18, 10f., *Fayṣal,* pp. 36f., *Mishkāh,* p. 77, 6ff.; *Munqidh,* p. 151, 6f., and *Iljām,* p. 110, 9f.). He goes on to give an account of the nature of intellectual cognition in terms of the presence of an image in a mirror which by its nature is ready to have manifested in it "the essential truth in all things" (*ḥaqīqatu l-ḥaqqi fī l-ʾumūri kullihā*) (p. 12, 30f.). The conception of the nature and operation of the mind is fundamentally that of the falāsifa, though al-Ghazālī here assiduously avoids the use of their language.[37] He goes on then to list and to explain (pp. 12f.) five impediments to the acquisition of knowledge: (1) inadequacy of mind, e.g., immaturity, (2) impurity of heart due to immoderate appetites, (3) failure to seek knowledge, (4) attachment to false opinions, and (5) ignorance of how to go about seeking knowledge. Concerning (5) he says that one who seeks to know cannot achieve knowledge of what is unknown "save by reflection on the things he does know which are directly related (*tunāsib*) to that which he seeks to know," so that when he follows the ways of systematic reflection (*ṭuruq al-iʿtibār*), sc., the rules of logical inference, "the essential reality of that which he seeks to know is revealed to his mind" (*injalā ḥaqīqatu l-maṭlūbi li-qalbihī*) (p. 13, 21ff.).[38] Because of their attachment to the teaching of their masters and the dialectical foundations of their discipline, the mutakallimūn of the schools tend, then, at the very least, to be afflicted by two of these impediments to the acquisition of higher knowledge.

Al-Ghazālī then describes the importance and nature of "the ways of systematic reflection," pleading his case for the essential role of formal logic in an extended image:

> The things one seeks to know are not given innately (*fiṭriyyah*) and cannot be caught save in the net of truths that are already achieved (*al-ʿulūmu l-ḥāṣilah*). Indeed, no truth (*ʿilm*) is achieved (*yaḥṣulu*) save through two prior truths that are combined and coupled in a particular way and from whose coupling (*izdiwāj*) a third truth is achieved, just as birth comes about through the coupling of a stallion and a mare.[39] No one who wants to bring about the birth of a thoroughbred can do this with a donkey or a wild ass or a man, but only from the male and female of a particular breed of horse and when there occurs a particular coupling between them. Thus every true cognition (*kullu ʿilm*) has two particular foundations (*ʾaṣlān*)

> and there is a way of coupling them, from which coupling of them the acquired knowledge which was sought comes about (*yaḥṣulu . . . al-ʿilmu l-mustafādu l-maṭlūb*). It is ignorance of these foundations and the manner of their coupling that precludes the knowledge. (p. 13, 22–29; note the use of '*al-mustafād*' here)

The failure to understand how to draw fully justified inferences, thus, is

> one of the causes (*'asbāb*) which prevents minds from knowing the essential realities of things, for of its nature (*bil-fiṭrah*) every mind is capable of knowing the essential realities (*maʿrifatu l-ḥaqā'iq*), because it is something divine and noble which is distinct from all other created beings by this particular characteristic (*fāraqa sā'ira jawāhiri l-ʿālami bi-hādhihi l-khāṣṣiyyah*). (p. 14, 1–4)

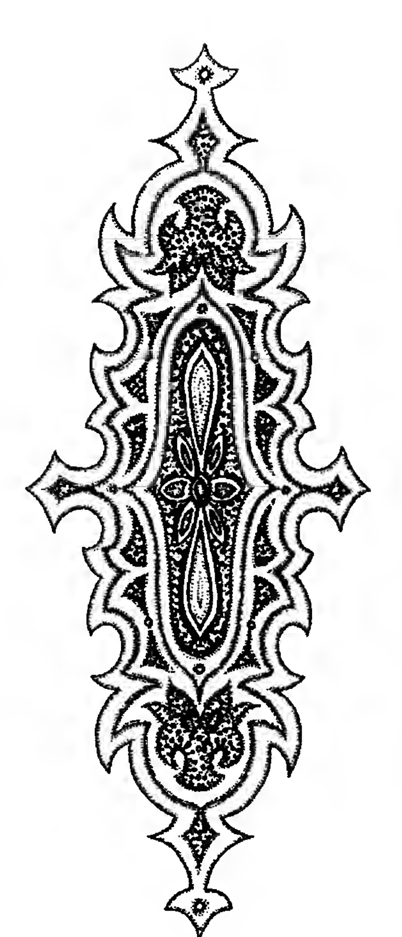
The expression here reflects again the usage of Avicenna.

Al-Ghazālī distinguishes two ways of acquiring knowledge, that of the sufis and that of "those who employ speculative reasoning" (*al-nuẓẓār*). Referring to the former, he speaks (*Iḥyā'* 3, pp. 17ff.) of attaining knowledge by inspiration (*'ilhām*), that is, "by direct apprehension of the angel which bestows knowledge on the mind" (*mushāhadatu l-malaki l-mulqī fī l-qalb*) (*Iḥyā'* 3, p. 17, 31). This is achieved by purification through ascetic exercises and belongs to the saints, while the acquisition of knowledge by means of rational inference is special to the scholars (*al-ʿulamā'*) (*ibid.*, pp. 17f.).[40] It remains, in either case, that

> the fact is that the mind is ready to have the essential reality of the Truth in all beings revealed to it (*'an yanjaliya fīhi ḥaqīqatu l-ḥaqqi fī l-'ashyā'i kullihā*) and something interferes only on account of the five causes we mentioned; they are, so to speak, a veil which comes between the mirror of the mind and the Well Guarded Tablet on which is engraved everything which God has enacted until the day of the resurrection. (3, p. 18, 1–5; cp. *ibid.*, p. 12, 30f.).[41]

The "Well Guarded Tablet" here designates the angel (separated intelligence) that is associated with the outermost celestial sphere. "The essential realities of all things are spread upon the Well Guarded Tablet" (*Iḥyā'* 3, p. 19, 28), which is also referred to as "the hearts

of the angels that stand nearest" (*qulūbu l-malā'ikati l-muqarrabīn*) (*ibid.*).[42] God is the Truth (*al-ḥaqq*) and when al-Ghazālī talks of the intellect's receiving "the essence of the Truth in all things" (3, p. 12, 31, and p. 18, 2), he means that in addition to the knowledge of the essential natures of things, this higher knowledge includes (or comes to include) insight into the presence of God as the primary cause of the events that take place in the world (cf., e.g. *Iḥyā'* 4, pp. 249f.) and so into the cosmic system as the manifestation of His originating "Determination" (*al-khalq* = *al-taqdīr*) and His "Accomplishment" (*al-qaḍā'*).[43] When he speaks, then, of God's giving "the light of the mind" to certain individuals (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 10, 12f., cited on p. 10 above), what he means is that it is given immediately by a secondary cause, namely, the agent intellect, upon the fulfillment of the conditions of its reception by the individual soul (sc., *istiʿdād al-qalb*). If the conditions of its reception are not fulfilled, its reception is impossible; even God cannot intervene so as to give it, since he has the power to create only that the conditions of whose coming to be are fulfilled (e.g., *Iḥyā'* 4, pp. 249f. and *Maqṣad*, p. 125, 9f.). The proximate conditions of the reception of this higher knowledge cannot be achieved through the science kalām.



3. *Two "Ash'arite" Tracts:* al-Iqtiṣād fī l-I'tiqād *and* al-Qudsiyyah

Al-Iqtiṣād

If the primary purpose of kalām is, as al-Ghazālī suggests, to defend the basic doctrines of Sunnī Islam, then one should regard *Tahāfut al-falāsifah, al-Mustaẓhirī,* and *Fayṣal al-Tafriqah* as, in one sense at least, kalām works. The first two, in fact, are cited in *Jawāhir* (p. 21) as being such. And so too, if logic is an element of kalām, then *Mi'yār al-'ilm* and *Miḥakk al-naẓar* might also be considered kalām works, particularly as al-Ghazālī says that the logic of the falāsifa differs from that of the mutakallimūn only in its terminology (*al-'ibārāt wal-iṣṭilāḥāt*) and in the greater detail in which it is explained (*Maqāṣid* 1, p. 3, and *Munqidh,* p. 104; cp. *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 23). The precise significance of these remarks of al-Ghazālī concerning logic are not altogether clear, however, since one cannot be sure that they are to be taken simply at face value. Again, *Maqṣad,* since it is a theological work involving one of the topics commonly dealt with by the mutakallimūn, might perhaps be viewed as a kalām work. While manifestly consistent with *Iḥyā'* and *Mishkāh,* for example, these works do not, however, seem to be consistent with traditional Ash'arite kalām either in language and conception or in theoretical assumptions and constructs that underlie and govern much, not to say most, of what they assert. They are, moreover, conspicuously different in these respects from *Iqtiṣād* and *Qudsiyyah,* which are expressly put forward as summary manuals of kalām theology, whose general pattern they follow. Where these latter works fit formally within the corpus of al-Ghazālī's work is therefore not immediately clear. Questions, indeed, have been raised concerning their consistency with the plainly Aristotelian cast of *Mi'yār* and other works. Impressions tend to confirm expectations, and so *Iqtiṣād* has commonly been read as an orthodox Ash'arite manual—and as one, moreover, in which al-Ghazālī sets forth his own basic teaching, including the exposition of an essentially occasionalistic account of the occurrence of all events that take place within the sublunary world.[1] That in *Iqtiṣād* he should deny, for example, the efficient causation of secondary causes which he asserted earlier in *Mi'yār* and *Miḥakk* and subsequently (even if not everywhere forthrightly and unambiguously) in *Iḥyā', Maqṣad, Jawāhir, Mishkāh, Arba'īn, Qisṭās, Mustaṣfā,* and *Iljām* would prima facie seem unlikely, however, unless one is willing to take it that al-Ghazālī is egregiously inconsistent either in what he believed or in what he chose to say. We have, therefore, to look briefly at several aspects of *Iqtiṣād* and also of *Qudsiyya* which may help to clarify their relationship to the common Ash'arite tradition and their place in the work of al-Ghazālī.

No one who is well acquainted with the traditional Ash'arite manuals can fail to find *Iqtiṣād* a very peculiar and, in places, perplexing book. Al-Juwaynī's *R. al-Niẓāmiyyah,* to be sure, departs significantly from certain elements of the common school tradition and from the traditional language as well, but it is quite straightforward in what it asserts and in its language and in its reasoning. Like al-Juwaynī's *Shāmil,* the long summae composed by his students (al-Ghazālī's fellow students), abū l-Qāsim al-Anṣārī and al-Kiyā' al-Harāsī, on the other hand, adhere closely to the classical tradition.[2] In *Iqtiṣād,* however, even though the traditional theses are formally stated and ostensibly upheld and defended against the Mu'tazila and others, the arguments and explanations al-Ghazālī presents for them

are, in several important instances at least, significantly different from those almost universally found in the common manuals. In a few cases the reasoning put forth to defend the thesis explicitly rejects traditional Ashᶜarite doctrine. In others the reasoning offered in support of the thesis, though not so clearly contrary to traditional doctrine, is by no means straightforward in presenting al-Ghazālī's intention and seems to be governed often by unstated presuppositions and to intend constructs and theses that, with few exceptions, are never plainly indicated. The frequent, though irregular, use of Avicenna's vocabulary is itself curious enough to give one pause. Were it not that al-Ghazālī presents his doctrine with a somewhat greater degree of clarity in earlier and in later works, the problem of what he means to say and what he does not mean to say (or means not to say) and of what he avoids saying might be nigh insoluble. The character and purpose of *Iqtiṣād,* in any case, remain problematic. Some of al-Ghazālī's reservations concerning the theology of the schools are indicated already in the second preface to the work (pp. 9ff.).

At the beginning of the fourth preface to *Iqtiṣād* (p. 15) al-Ghazālī states that in *Miḥakk al-naẓar* and *Miᶜyār al-ᶜilm* he had set out the rules and principles of formal reasoning in some detail, but that here he will restrict the forms of argumentation employed and avoid the discussion of more abstruse matters for the sake of brevity. At the very end of the book (p. 257) he reiterates the point, saying that he has restricted his arguments (*ʾadillah*) to those that are obvious enough that they can be understood by the majority of people (*ʾaktharu l-ʾafhām),* meaning, no doubt, what he takes to be the mind of the average religious scholar. Not only does this indicate that there is a more detailed and intellectually more profound level at which the questions he will treat may be studied and understood, but the reference to two works on Aristotelian logic indicates to the reader in what direction this more advanced understanding is to be pursued. Again, when al-Ghazālī presents and describes the grounds of the premises that are to be employed in the arguments he will set forth, he lists (1) the data of the senses (*al-ḥissiyyāt*), (2) immediate intuition (*al-ᶜaql al-maḥḍ*), (3) universal report (*al-tawātur*), and (4) conclusions drawn on the basis of (1)–(3). The most conspicuous difference between this list and those given earlier in *Miᶜyār* (pp. 108ff.) and *Miḥakk* (p. 57ff.) and subsequently in *Qisṭās* (p. 60) and *Mustaṣfā* (1, pp. 44ff.) is that "experience" is absent. The significance of this omission, however, is not immediately clear. It is very likely that he wishes to give a fundamentally traditional list and so understands this to be included somehow under sense data, though it may be also—and perhaps more likely—that he wishes to avoid the superfluous introduction of the issue of the causal connection of events that are perceived to occur with universal consistency. The present list differs also from the others by the addition of two further sources, (5) the data of revelation (*al-samᶜiyyāt*) and (6) propositions believed or conceded by one's opponent. Here (5) would seem quite plainly to indicate that what he has to say here is written for the average religious scholar and so on that elementary or lower intellectual level that he says elsewhere is characteristic of the theology of the schools; and this is confirmed by (6) with its unequivocal allusion to disputational dialectic. It is thus that in *Iḥyāʾ* (1, pp. 97f.) he describes *Qudsiyya* as a manual which is quite adequate for young people whose faith might be undermined by the disputation of heretics and speaks of *Iqtiṣād* as a manual which, though somewhat more detailed, similarly does not go beyond the basic tenets of Muslim belief (*qawāʾid al-ᶜaqāʾid*) and says (p. 41, 2f.) that in it he has held disputation against the heretics within moderate limits. A statement made in *Arbaᶜīn* sheds some further light on the problem. There (p. 24) he says that *Iqtiṣād* "contains the core of the science of the mutakallimūn but goes further in precise argumentation (*al-taḥqīq*) and comes closer to knocking on the gates of true cognitive insight (*al-maᶜrifah*) than does the superficial discourse (*al-kalām al-rasmī*) which one finds in the books of the mutakallimūn." In other words, though *Iqtiṣād* goes somewhat beyond the limits of the traditional manuals in its reasoning and argumentation, it is by no means a work of higher speculative theology—of *ᶜilm al-mukāshafah*—and one should not expect that al-Ghazālī will present here his whole theological doctrine—the metaphysical and psychological theories that underlie and order some of what he will say or suggest—or that he will make clear his fuller understanding even of the basic theses he does treat.

Moral Obligation, Against the Mu'tazila

In the *First Introduction,* al-Ghazālī says, following traditional Ashᶜarite teaching, that formal inquiry into the question of whether God exists or not is first provoked by the claims of the prophets (pp. 6f.), but then, instead of going on to take up the question of the obligation to undertake such speculative inquiry (*wujūb al-naẓar*) here in its usual place, he postpones it (p. 8) for later treatment. Even here, however, the interlocutor's question indicates the direction of his thinking, as he says (p. 8), "I do not object to the notion that this being aroused to inquire is from my self (*al-inbiᶜāthu lil-ṭalabi min nafsī*), but I don't know whether it is the product of natural disposition and nature (*thamaratu l-jibillati wal-ṭabᶜ*) or is something required by the intellect (*muqtaḍā l-ᶜaql*) or is demanded by the revealed law." Here, we have a characteristic example of the ambivalence which al-Ghazālī manifests toward the traditional school theology throughout *Iqtiṣād*. The last two alternatives mean to present the Muᶜtazilite[3] and the Ashᶜarite positions respectively. According to the former, every adult of sound mind knows intuitively that some actions are blameworthy as such and in themselves and that anyone who voluntarily performs them deserves blame, while others are morally obligatory and that one who performs them deserves praise. Furthermore, we know, also by immediate intuition, that it is ethically necessary that one do that which is best for his ultimate good. Recognizing, then, that it is possible that the world may be created by a higher being who punishes men and rewards them in accord with the good and bad they have done, one is obliged on purely rational grounds to seek to determine whether or not in fact such a being exists. That such rational inquiry is a universal obligation is an inference based on premises that are purely rational and fully justified; and the obligation, therefore, is in principle antecedent to and altogether independent of any prophetic revelation. By contrast, the traditional Ashᶜarite thesis is that there is no moral obligation of any kind prior to and apart from the giving of the revealed law; what is good or is bad to do is determined solely by the command and prohibition of the law and is unrelated either to anything intrinsic to the act or its effects or to any benefit or harm that may ensue upon

obedience or disobedience. The obligation to seek to know whether or not God exists derives from the law's command that men know God and worship Him; the obligation cannot be known as something obligatory prior to the recognition of the divine authority of the law. Al-Ghazālī's first alternative, however, sc., that the obligation may be 'the product of natural disposition and nature', is peculiar in that it does not fit within the traditional problematic of the manuals and, if one supposes that al-Ghazālī adheres to traditional Ashᶜarite doctrine, may be surprising, especially when taken together with the preceding phrase. Read, however, within the broader context of al-Ghazālī's theology as set out in *Iḥyā'* and elsewhere, both the expression and the implied conception are not surprising in the least,[4] as one sees immediately how he will validate all three alternatives, bringing them together as elements of his own, higher understanding of the matter. Within this context, one hears '*nafsī*' not as a somewhat ambivalent 'my self' but formally as 'my soul' in the sense in which 'soul' is employed by the falāsifa, by al-Kindī or Avicenna. And, such a reading is hardly implausible given the frequent occurrence in *Iqtiṣād* of terms drawn from the lexicon of Avicenna and the falāsifa.

Later, then (pp. 189ff.), al-Ghazālī takes up the traditional question of the obligation to seek to know that God exists and that men are rewarded or punished according to their actions and whether this obligation obtains prior to the coming of prophetic revelation. His reasoning here is founded in an earlier analysis (pp. 161ff.) of 'necessary', 'good', and 'bad' as ethical terms. He defines the ethically necessary as that which must be done rather than omitted in order to avoid some harm, real or imagined, to one's self, so that what is most properly called 'necessary' is "that in whose omission there is some manifest harm" (*mā fī tarkihi ḍararun ẓāhir*) (p. 162, 2; cf. also p. 192). When he comes to apply this to the question of the ethical necessity of the speculative inquiry into God's existence, al-Ghazālī's application of the definition to the problem is interesting. He begins with the traditional thesis, "Had the revelation not come, men would not have to know God and to thank Him for his benefits (*la-mā kāna yajibu ᶜalā l-ᶜibād . . .*)" (p. 189, 6). His argument (pp. 192ff.), then, is that the Prophet announces dire threats against those who do not accept his message as being from God and as requiring obedience, and that under the circumstances the prudent man has to look seriously

into the possibility that the prophet's claim may be true, since to neglect doing so might entail untold harm. Of the alternative possibilities, performance and omission, the performance of the act is necessary (*tarajjaḥa fiʿluhu ʿalā tarkihī*) (p. 192, 7; cp. *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 62, 9ff.). Theological speculation therefore becomes morally necessary (*wājib*) only when the revelation is delivered, and God, who sends the Prophet and determines the message, is the one who makes it necessary (*al-mūjib*). In conclusion, then, al-Ghazālī says (p. 195, 5ff.):

> The correct formulation is to say that [moral] necessity is the necessity of a given alternative (*al-wujūbu huwa l-rujḥān*) and the one who makes it necessary is God; the one who makes it known is the Apostle and what makes the nature of the threat and the veracity of the Apostle known is the intellect and what impels one to embark on the path of deliverance is nature (*al-ṭabʿ*). It is thus that one has to understand the truth regarding this question and to pay no attention to the usual statements (*al-kalām al-muʿtād*) which can neither cure thirst nor eliminate ambiguity.

Again here al-Ghazālī speaks of nature[5] and, within the context as it is formulated, apparently conceives it as an operative element in a series of secondary causes, not, to be sure, a series that must occur invariantly in all subjects whenever the first element is given, but a sequence of secondary efficient causes, nevertheless, which are effective generally and in most cases (*ʿalā l-ʾakthar*). One may, thus, hear "*al-kalām al-muʿtād*" as meaning the traditional school theology, and that it is so to be read is made clear enough by the remarks made earlier in the same section (pp. 169f.) on the intellectual incompetence of the average theologian. More significantly for our present context, ethical obligation, the moral "necessity" of one act with respect to another or of its omission, is conceived and expressed after the pattern of efficient causes in the coming to be of contingent possibles. Moreover, he employs here, as throughout the book, an expression which is characteristic of Avicenna's metaphysics: the efficient cause is the *murajjiḥ*, i.e., it is that which necessarily determines an outcome with respect to alternative possibilities.

In all of this, al-Ghazālī has very successfully upheld the traditional thesis set forth at the beginning of the section, sc., that the obligation to basic theological inquiry comes about only because of the revelation, and that it is God who causes it to be an obligation. The question of whether this inquiry is obligatory, even if only on the most elementary level, for every Muslim or only for some within the community (discussed on pp. 9ff.) is not raised in the present context but is implicitly taken care of: those individuals who, because of *taqlīd* to the religious tradition of the social group, have no doubts or questions concerning the religious belief that is proposed to them within the community have no obligation to seek any level of theoretical justification, confirmation, or understanding of their belief. (Note that, though the two are closely associated, this is a quite different question from that of the status of kalām as a science which is necessary for the community—*wājibu kifāyah*—but not for every individual.) The analysis, moreover, is fully consistent with al-Ghazālī's conception of *taqlīd* and with the statements made in *Iḥyāʾ* and elsewhere concerning those for whom kalām is beneficial. Read within the broader context of his theology, however, al-Ghazālī's conception of the nature of ethical obligation basically does away also with the traditional understanding that ethical good and bad originate in and are determined by God's command alone and, having no intrinsic relationship to the beings and events they concern, cannot as such be rationalized.[6] His rejection of the traditional ethical theory of the Ashʿarite school as based on a failure to grasp the true nature of things is explicitly signaled when he tells the reader to pay no attention to what is usually said in explanation of this thesis since it can neither cure the soul's thirst for perfection nor the mind's desire for true knowledge and insight. At the same time, he has presented a carefully reasoned rejection of the Muʿtazilite theses that the obligation to theological speculation is not only universal but also obtains independently of, and so prior to, the coming of prophetic revelation. Al-Ghazālī's statement (p. 191) that the origin of the Muʿtazilite thesis concerning the necessity of theological speculation and of their conception of God's justice with which it is allied lies in associative impressions in which God is conceived after the image of an earthly ruler is interesting (though the operation of such impressions may be more conspicuous in some Ashʿarite writing; cf., e.g., *Lumaʿ*, §§54ff., and al-Isfarāʾīnī, Fr. 56f., p. 157). Here, once again, the formulation is to be noted, as al-Ghazālī says, "the sources from which they are taken are impressions that through the normal course of events have become firmly set in their minds as similar ones are set alongside

them and which there is no way to avoid (*ʾawhāmun rusikhat fīhim mina l-ʿādāti tuʿāriḍuhā ʾamthāluhā wa-lā maḥīṣa minhā*) (p. 191, 10f.). In his conception of the nature of associative impressions (*ʾawhām*) and the way they function in the formation of judgments, which he outlined earlier (pp. 167ff.), al-Ghazālī follows Avicenna.[7] In some respects, moreover, the position he sets out is much closer to that of the Muʿtazila than to that of the Ashʿarites in that (a) he holds that ethical imperatives can be fully rationalized, and (b) holds that ethical necessity in the present case is a kind of natural necessity, being founded on the obligation to avoid harm to one's self.

Al-Ghazālī uses the same conception of the nature and ground of ethical necessity (pp. 165ff.; cp. *Qudsiyyah,* p. 91, 8ff. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 112, 18ff.) to refute the Muʿtazilite thesis that God is morally obliged to benefit his creatures by sending prophets, etc., if not to do what is absolutely best for them, on the principle that it is impossible that God suffer harm or obtain benefit from the existence or nonexistence of any creature. The argument is essentially dialectical, however, since al-Ghazālī in fact holds that God necessarily creates what he creates and can have created no other universe. This is indicated in the statement (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 43, 3), "'*al-qadīm*' [the eternal, a description unique to God] is an expression for that which exists necessarily in all its aspects" (*mā huwa wājibu l-wujūdi fī jamīʿi jihātihī*).[8]

Creation and Secondary Causes

At the very beginning of *Iqtiṣād* al-Ghazālī makes a point of telling the reader that, in view of the restricted focus of the work, he will not "consider the world as it is world and body and sky and earth, but on the contrary only as it is God's making (*ṣanʿu llāh*)" (p. 4, 2f.). It would seem plain that when he speaks of the world as "body and sky and earth" al-Ghazālī is referring to what he will describe elsewhere as "the universal, fundamental, permanent, and stable causes, which are constant and unchanging."[9] What he is saying, in effect, is that he will not discuss cosmology and the question of the determinate operation of secondary causes in the order of the universe, but rather will view all entities and events as they are created by

God. The efficient operation of secondary causes is, as we have seen, implied and alluded to in several places in *Iqtiṣād,* but the matter is never formally thematized and discussed. God is the one who created the system, ordered its parts, and set it into motion. His "Accomplishment" (*al-qaḍāʾ*) was the initial creation (*al-ikhtirāʿ*) of the "universal causes" (*al-ʾasbābu l-kulliyyah*), and therein the creation of the more proximate, transitory causes and the conditions of the coming to be of every being and event that, following the program set down in the Well Guarded Tablet (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 18; translated on p. 26 above), would necessarily flow from them to the end of time. Al-Ghazālī sometimes will distinguish '*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' from '*ikhtaraʿa, yakhtariʿu*', using the former as a synonym of '*qaddara, yuqaddiru*' (to determine) and the latter as a synonym of '*ʾawjada, yūjidu*' (to cause to exist),[10] though he frequently employs them equivalently as 'to create'. The assertion of God's uniqueness (*al-tawḥīd*) is the assertion that He alone determines what shall come to be and is uniquely the originating cause of its coming to be. According to al-Ghazālī's usage, to create (*al-khalq, al-ikhtirāʿ*) is to determine the existence of an entity or event out of the indeterminate possibility of its coming to be or not coming to be, and since every event that occurs in the sublunary world results necessarily from the antecedent operation of the celestial and universal causes as originally created and ordered by God, not even the highest of the "universal and enduring causes" (sc., the Throne or outermost heaven) can be said of itself to "create", i.e., of itself, autonomously to initiate the action of any series of causes and effects or the existence of any element in any given series. God is the one who makes the causes to function as causes (*musabbibu l-ʾasbāb*).[11] Viewed in the original determination of the contingent necessity of its coming to be as against the abstract possibility of its either coming to be or not coming to be, the existence of every being and event that comes to be within the world is effectively determined and so "created" in the initial creation (*ikhtirāʿ, ʾījād*) of the universe, even though it actually takes place through the subsequent operation of various intermediate causes, proximate and remote. Given this understanding of the terms, the thesis that God "creates" a particular event—is uniquely the cause of its existence—does not formally deny the efficacy of secondary causes. "The omnipotent master of the heavens alone has absolute dominion" (*tafarrada bil-jabarūti jabbāru*

l-samawāt) (p. 90, 3).[12] The consistency of language and intention is conspicuous. In *Munqidh* (p. 106), al-Ghazālī says, "Nature is forced to operate by God (*al-ṭabīʿatu musakhkharatun li-llāh*); it does not operate (*lā taʿmal*) of itself but is used (*mustaʿmalah*) by its creator; the sun and the moon and the stars and the elemental natures (*al-ṭabāʾiʿ*) are forced to operate by His command; none of them has of itself any autonomous activity (*lā faʿla li-shayʾin minhā bi-dhātihi ʿan dhātihi*)."[13] Here "the sun and the moon and the stars and the elemental natures" refers to the universal and permanent causes, "the world as body and sky and earth" (discussion of which is explicitly excluded from *Iqtiṣād,* as we have seen). These things do not exist by emanation each from a higher being in the hierarchy, but rather each one with its particular nature and properties was created directly by God and its eventual operation determined by the place He assigned to it within the system which constitutes the whole.

It is thus that al-Ghazālī will insist throughout the *Iqtiṣād* that existence comes from God alone, since He alone creates (*ikhtaraʿa, khalaqa*). In accord, then, with the restriction that he will not consider the world as a system, but only as it is "God's making," he says (pp. 172f.):[14]

> The powers of the soul were created obedient to mental impressions and imaginings (*al-ʾawhām wal-takhayyulāt*) according to the operations of [God's] customs (*bi-ḥukmi ʾijrāʾi l-ʿādāt*), so that when a man has an imaginative image of something nice to eat, either through recollection or through vision, his saliva immediately flows and the corners of his mouth drool and this takes place through the power which God has compelled (*sakhkharahā*) to secrete saliva which aids in mastication because of imagination and impressions, for its nature is to be aroused by imagination (*shaʾnuhā ʾan tanbaʿitha bi-ḥasabi l-takhayyul*).

The conception of the "powers of the soul" and of the role of imagination and of aestimatio is essentially that of Avicenna, as is the vocabulary, and has no place in traditional Ashʿarite thought. The characteristically religious expressions '*sakhkhara*' and '*ʾijrāʾu l-ʿādāt*' al-Ghazālī commonly employs in speaking of the operation of secondary causes. That is to say, 'God's custom' (*al-ʿādah, ʿādat Allāh*), which the Ashʿarite school tradition employs to speak of the normal and sometimes invariant sequences of events in an occasionalistic universe, is employed by al-Ghazālī to describe the lawful operation of secondary causes in a deterministic universe willed and created by God.[15] Having hinted at a complex causal rationalization of the meaning of ethical terms and the origin of ethical necessity, he closes the section by saying (p. 174, 7) that this is "as much explanation of the truth concerning these matters (*ʾasrāru hādhā l-faṣl*) as befits this short handbook."[16]

Exegesis of Prophetic Texts Concerning the Cosmic System

The seventh and eighth theses in the section on God's existence are devoted to the denial of His being spatially located with respect to any point within the created universe. That al-Ghazālī should feel the need to take up this matter separately and at considerable length following thesis 4 (pp. 38f.), that God is not a *jawhar,* and thesis 5 (pp. 39f.) that He is not a body, may at first seem curious,[17] but it is formally required in order to counter the contrary doctrines of the Karrāmiyya. The two theses are also dealt with at some length in *Qudsiyya* (§1, 7f., pp. 82f. = Iḥyāʾ 1, pp. 106f.).

Thesis 7 is that "God is not in any one of the six directions." Here, in replying to an objection based on a Tradition according to which the Prophet approved a gesture by a slave girl indicating that she believed God to be in the sky, al-Ghazālī explains his exegesis of the Tradition in part by saying that petition to God is directed upwards as a sign of submissiveness and that "submissiveness and giving glory are the act of the heart [sc. the soul] and the intellect is its instrument . . . , for the heart was created with a nature (*khuliqat khilqatan*) such that it is influenced by the repeated actions of the bodily members, just as the bodily members are influenced by the beliefs of the soul" (p. 45, 3ff.). He then explains at some length that one has to do here with a metaphor in which what is referred to is height of rank (*rutbah*), not height of place. This interpretation is found in earlier Ashʿarite works (e.g., *Mushkil,* pp. 60f. and *Ishārah,* p. 34). One notes that the assertion that the soul is influenced or affected (*mutaʾaththir*)

by events that take place outside it implies that one contingent event has an effect (*ta'thīr*) on another, something consistently denied in traditional Ashʿarite works. According to al-Ghazālī, devotional acts commanded by the Prophet have "properties" (*khawāṣṣ*) which act on the soul in a way analogous to the way that the properties of medicines act on the body (*Munqidh*, pp. 151f. and 162).[18] When he speaks about the bodily members' being influenced by the beliefs (*muʿtaqadāt*) of the soul, what he has in mind are cognitive acts (acts of knowing, opinion, impression, imagination, etc.) which constitute motivations and as such are the causes of voluntary actions (cf. *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 23ff.) or of their arousing one or another kind of involuntary response, as in the example presented in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 172; translated on p. 38 above).

Al-Ghazālī goes on to offer a second interpretation of the metaphor, which is that "the storehouses of [God's] blessings are the heavens and the wardens of his gifts are the angels; their residence is the celestial realm (*malakūt al-samawāt*) and it is they who are entrusted with His gifts,"[19] wherefore, nature demands (*al-ṭabʿu yataqāḍā*) that in praying, one turn his face in that direction, and he concludes by saying, "this then moves (*muḥarrik*) the faces of those who are leaders in religious matters in the direction of the sky in conformity both to nature and the revelation (*ṭabʿan wa-sharʿan*)."[20] Al-Ghazālī refrains, however, from informing the reader of exactly how he understands the place and function of these celestial intermediaries in the transmission of God's blessings to terrestrial beings or exactly what it means to say "by nature." Finally, he takes the thesis as an opportunity to set forth the difference between what makes sense (is *mafhūm*) and is intelligible (i.e., what the mind must assent to) and conceivable and what cannot be imagined (pp. 49, 8ff.).

Thesis 8 (pp. 50ff.) is concerned with descriptions of God's ascending the Throne (*al-istiwā'u ʿalā l-ʿarsh:* Q20,5 & *alibi*) and of His nightly "descent" (*al-nuzūl*) to the lowest heaven. Having stated that it would take too long to deal with the expressions employed, al-Ghazālī makes a point (pp. 51f.) of noting that it is inappropriate to introduce simple people (*ʿawāmmu l-khalq*) to the exegesis of such things and cites a famous Tradition according to which Mālik b. Anas, in response to a question concerning God's ascending the Throne, replied by saying, "The ascent is known; how it takes place (*kayfiyyatuhū*) is not known; to ask about it is heresy (*bidʿah*); to believe it is obligatory."[21] Here, says al-Ghazālī, Mālik was speaking only with regard to simple people, "because their minds are not capable of receiving the things of the intellect (*al-maʿqūlāt*) and of comprehending lexicographical matters (*al-lughāt*), nor are they capable of understanding the Arabs' extended use of linguistic expressions in their metaphors" (p. 52, 5ff.). For the scholars, for whom it is appropriate to go into such matters, however, he will offer a brief, systematic explanation of these metaphors. Concerning "the ascent" (pp. 55ff.), al-Ghazālī states that 'ascended' has to refer to a relationship of God to the Throne (the outermost heaven or sphere) and goes through a traditional kind of analysis so as to eliminate a number of possible interpretations in order to assert that here '*istiwā*'' must be equivalent to '*istīlā*'' (take possession/become master of), citing the example of the expression's occurrence with regard to princes. This, however, does no more than suggest a precise identification of the metaphor by substituting a lexically less ambivalent word for the one in question. It does not interpret the metaphor. The failure to interpret the metaphor is consistent with al-Ghazālī's previously stated intention not to go into questions of cosmology.[22] Concerning "the descent" (pp. 58ff.), he offers two interpretations which he considers acceptable, the first, that it refers metaphorically to an angel (p. 57), and the second (pp. 57ff.), that it is a metaphor for God's goodness and condescension (*talaṭṭuf* and *tawāḍuʿ*) toward His creatures. The second interpretation he explains at great length, while the first, since it involves the operation of the cosmic system, he does not elaborate at all.[23]

In al-Ghazālī's discussion of these two theses we have an exemplary manifestation of the complexity of *Iqtiṣād* and of its ambivalence. The topics dealt with, *al-fawqiyyah* (God's "being above"), *al-istiwā'* (His "ascent"), and *al-nuzūl* (His "descent"), were the focus of heated debate and polemic in the Ashʿarites' conflict with the Karrāmiyya and with the Ḥanbalites as well.[24] This is unquestionably the primary reason for treating them separately and at this point in the book (cp., e.g., *Irshād*, pp. 39ff.), and in part perhaps for the relative length with which they are discussed. They are also, however, of great importance to al-Ghazālī in that, by his interpretation, they expressly involve God's relationship to the celestial world and His

governance of the terrestrial world through celestial intermediaries and so lend the authority of God and the Prophet to his theological cosmology. It is common in the school tradition to offer multiple, alternative interpretations of the canonically authoritative names and descriptions of God that may be shown to be philologically justifiable and as theologically compatible with the basic doctrine of the school and therefore plausibly valid. Here, however, while traditional interpretations are presented in some detail, others are offered that point to concepts, constructs, and a context which are altogether foreign to the traditional Ashʿarite theology, and these latter are left without elaboration or explanation. He is not trying to deceive the reader, but rather, in a way that conforms to the convention of the traditional manuals, to offer to each that which he is most apt to receive with understanding. He says nothing which, as presented, is formally incompatible with the more radical *taʾwīl* of his "higher" theology, for which there are ample indications for those who are attuned to it. The remarks made following the introduction of the citation of Q20,5 that simple people should not be introduced to the formal interpretation of such verses is thus particularly pregnant in the context, as he offers interpretations which he feels that traditionally minded religious scholars may appropriately accept and understand (p. 52, 7), but withholds his own "higher" interpretation, with respect to which the scholars are simple believers (*min al-ʿawāmm*).

The Human Power of Voluntary Actions

The most tortuous and difficult section of *Iqtiṣād* is perhaps that in which he talks about (and round about) the question of the human power of action (generally pp. 80ff.). Since this question was treated hastily and somewhat inadequately in *Creation and the Cosmic System,* it will be well to look at it in a more orderly fashion here. It must be kept in mind (a) that al-Ghazālī is here formally addressing the Muʿtazilite thesis that men originate the being of their own acts autonomously out of the pure possibilty of their coming to be or not coming to be, and (b) that he had decided at the outset that he would not take up cosmology (i.e., the determination of sublunary events through the efficient causality of celestial beings), and (c) that he wishes, if not to hold closely to, at least to employ and in some way validate, the traditional Ashʿarite language concerning human power and human actions. The arguments are labored and insistent, for the doctrine of the creation of human voluntary actions (*khalq al-ʾafʿāl*) had from the beginning been one of the principal, identifying elements of the Ashʿarite doctrine in its opposition to the Muʿtazila, and for al-Ghazālī to reject or seriously to alter the traditional conception of the thesis would overtly signal his abandonment of Ashʿarite orthodoxy. It is for the same reason that even in *Miḥakk,* where already he had made a point of distancing himself from the traditional teaching of the Ashʿarite school in a number of matters, he carefully sought not to give offense on the matter of human actions, lest he irrevocably alienate the audience he most wanted to attract. His own teaching is that certain sensations or cognitive states act deterministically as motivations (*dawāʿī*) and thereby cause an act of the will, which in turn activates the power of voluntary action (*al-qudrah*) which necessarily produces the act.[25]

Throughout this section, al-Ghazālī's language is very carefully chosen. When he says, for example (p. 91, 11f.) that "when [God] creates (*khalaqa*) the motion and creates with it the [act of the human] power to do it, He is the one who autonomously creates (*yastabiddu bil-ikhtirāʿ*) both the [act of the] power and its object," his use of 'creates' and 'creation' so restricts the focus to God's determinant power that any question of secondary causes is formally set aside. One notes that earlier in the discussion he had offered a general definition of the power to act (*al-qudrah*) as "that through which the object comes to actuality given the act of the will and the receptivity of the subject" (*mā yaḥṣulu bihā l-maqdūru ʿinda taḥaqquqi l-ʾirādati wa-qabūli l-maḥall*) (p. 91, 2f.; cp. p. 81, 5f). This definition is correct according to the teaching of al-Ghazālī, both with respect to human acts and God's creation, but not according to that of the Muʿtazila.[26] In his ensuing argument against the Muʿtazilite thesis that the voluntary actions of human agents are truly autonomous and are not determinately caused by the antecedent states of the agent, al-Ghazālī returns to the description of the power of action as that whose act creates the event which is its object (p. 91, 5f.) and takes 'creates' in the formal sense that it has for him within the context of his own deterministic

system. Given that the Muʿtazila, on valid lexicographical grounds, allow the use of '*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' (but not '*ikhtaraʿa, yakhtariʿu*') with a human agent as subject, the dialectical move is doubly conspicuous. (The imposition of one's own conceptions onto the terms of his opponents' formulations is a common maneuver in the dialectic of kalām.) Nor does al-Ghazālī here address the question of the role and function of the antecedent states of the agent. "In sum, the one whose power is all encompassing (*al-wāsiʿu l-qudrah*) is the one who has the power to create the [act of the human agent's] power to act and its object simultaneously" (p. 92, 1). Consistently, then, the Muʿtazilite concept that the human agent autonomously causes the existence of his primary acts and their claim that as an equivalent of '*qaddara, yuqaddiru*' (to do purposefully and in intended measure) '*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' can be used of human agents (cf., e.g., *Mughnī* 7, pp. 207 and 210, and 8, pp. 162f. and 283) are together rejected when al-Ghazālī goes on to identify the causation of existence with creation: "Since the noun 'creator' (*al-khāliqu wal-mukhtariʿ*) is said of one who causes something to exist through his own power (*ʾawjada l-shayʾa bi-qudratihī*) and both the [human agent's] power and its object are through God's power and the object is not [created] by the human agent's power . . . [the latter] is not called a 'creator' and 'one who creates'. . . ."[27] The human voluntary act therefore is described as a performance (*kasb*), following the lexical usage of the Koran (p. 92, 2ff.). All of this sounds very much like traditional Ashʿarite teaching. Had he said '*lam yaqiʿ*' or '*lam yaḥṣul bi-qudrati l-ʿabd*', it might be difficult to understand him to intend anything else, but, as it is, his intention is not fully and explicitly stated. That is, he holds that the human agent with all his faculties is created and that the acts of his faculties are the results of a complex web of present conditions and antecedent causes, interior and exterior, terrestrial and celestial, all of which follow determinately from God's original act of creation. The causal function of the faculty, however, and of its act as an element within the sequence of causes and conditions, is simply not mentioned. In short, none of the statements al-Ghazālī makes here is inconsistent with the thesis that, contrary to traditional Ashʿarite teaching, God determines the necessity of the occurrence of every event in the universe through sequences of secondary efficient causes

and therefore is the primary, originating cause of the activation of the human agent's power of acting and through it of, for example, the motion of his hand. The sense of what he says is particularly nuanced if here, as sometimes in other passages, al-Ghazālī distinguishes '*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' from '*ikhtaraʿa, yakhtariʿu*', as he does, employing the former as an equivalent of '*qaddara, yuqaddiru*' to describe God's eternal determination of the being of the universe in its every detail as opposed to the act of creating the "universal and enduring causes." The verse "To him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth" (Q2,116) implies that "from Him is the source of all actions and their point of reference" (*al-ʾafʿālu jamīʿuhā minhu maṣdaruhā wa-marjiʿuhā*) (*Jawāhir*, p. 45, 14).

In the following section (p. 92, 8ff.) al-Ghazālī takes up the question of the act's "taking place" (*al-wuqūʿ, al-ḥuṣūl*) through the agent's power, but again constructs the argument so as neither to address the real issue nor to set forth his own position with regard to it. What he does is focus on the notion of a faculty's "relation" (*taʿalluq*) to its object in such a way as to offer a dialectical refutation of the claim that the agent's power is "related to its object as cause to effect" (as the *sabab* is to its *musabbab*). His reasoning is that (1) cognition and volition are also related to their respective objects so that a "relation" (*al-taʿalluq*) does not as such and of itself entail that its object come to be.[28] He goes on then (2) to view the question on the basis of the Muʿtazilite thesis that the power to act exists in the agent prior to his performing the act. If it is really prior to the act, he says, then the relationship is not one of causing an effect, since the power exists in the absence of the occurrence of its object (p. 93, 11ff.), and this will be true also if the power is redefined (p. 94, 3) as "being ready for [commensurate to] the occurrence of its object" (*mutahayyiʾatun li-wuqūʿi l-maqdūr*).[29] He concludes, then, by stating (p. 94, 5ff.) that the Muʿtazilite position is, in effect, that "the [human agent's] power to act exists and is related to its object but the object does not occur through it" (*mawjūdatun mutaʿalliqatun bil-maqdūri wal-maqdūru ghayru wāqiʿin bi-hā*), wherefore it must take place through the power of God, and we are all in agreement! The argument is essentially specious; he has not stated the Muʿtazilite thesis fully and correctly and has said only that under his own narrow

restriction of the terms and elements of the question and under his present construction of them, the human agent's power of acting is not the originating cause of the occurrence of the act.

The ensuing argument (p. 94, 12ff.) contributes nothing and here, as in many another place, al-Ghazālī concludes the subsection by saying (p. 95, 9): "This is as much of this question as belongs in this short handbook." What follows on the topic runs in the same vein of artful ambivalence. Much later, in an altogether different context (p. 221, 1ff.), he remarks that there are various kinds of matters to take up which would involve a study of the essential natures of things (*ḥaqā'iqu l-'umūr*), knowledge of which is not really necessary, since they are not pertinent to the acquisition of the basic foundation of orthodox belief (*tahdhīb al-i'tiqād*). As included among such things he mentions the question of "whether the human power of voluntary action (*al-qudratu l-muḥdathah*) has contraries as its objects or not and has as its objects different kinds of things or not and whether the human power to act may have as its object an action that lies outside the locus of the power itself." These are precisely the questions which earlier he had declined to take up seriously and directly.

There is, in sum, no unambiguous evidence in *Iqtiṣād* that al-Ghazālī subscribes to the traditional occasionalism of the Ash'arite school. If one will distinguish the two senses of '*qudrah*', viz., (a) an agent's power of acting as a faculty from (b) its act or activation in producing the action which is its effect, then most of the difficulties are done away with. God creates, through a complex of secondary causes, celestial and terrestrial, the human individual with his various faculties, including the power to act, and through another series of causal events the activation of the power so as to cause the occurrence of a particular action, and accordingly, in the strictest sense, creates both the power with its act and the event which results from its act. The conspicuous difference between the reasoning in the traditional Ash'arite manuals and the oblique arguments of *Iqtiṣād* is that through so lengthy a discussion the only thing al-Ghazālī clearly commits himself to is the thesis that God creates every being and every event, though exactly what is meant here by 'creates' is never fully and explicitly stated. As we have seen, he nowhere unambiguously commits himself to the thesis of al-Juwaynī that the action "does not take place through the created power of voluntary action, nor does

[the power] have any effect on it, but is related to it as a cognition is related to its object" (*Ikhtiṣār*, fol. 157r, 13f.; cf. also ibid. foll. 167v f.; *Shāmil* [69], p. 182, 14ff., where al-Ash'arī is cited; and al-Harāsī, fol. 183v, 16ff.). Read by itself, the section would be most perplexing. Within the broader context of *Iqtiṣād*, however, where there are indications that he recognizes the efficient operation of secondary causes, his intention in this section begins to emerge.

In refuting the "Mu'tazilite" doctrine of *tawallud*, that is, of the causation of a secondary act by a primary act (pp. 95f.), al-Ghazālī goes to great length to assert that God creates the displacement of the water in order to allow for the movement which he also creates in the hand, but he carefully avoids the question of whether perhaps God uses the hand to move the water.[30]

God's Essential Attributes

Al-Ghazālī's discussion of God's essential attributes other than power in *Iqtiṣād* is, for the most part, hardly more straightforward than that involving His power. What he has to say tends, on the whole, to resemble that of the usual Ash'arite manuals, though the matter requires further, more detailed study against the broader background of his other writings. The traditional understanding of the essential attributes as distinct from God's essence and from one another is important to al-Ghazālī as, by so distinguishing power, knowledge, and will, it furnishes the basis for his denial of the thesis of Avicenna and the falāsifa that creation flows necessarily from God's essence as such (*bi-dhātihī*) and therefore eternally (cf., e.g., *Tahāfut*, pp. 214f. and *Maqṣad*, p. 145). Otherwise, however, al-Ghazālī seems to have had little interest in the matter and nowhere any desire to set forth his own formal analysis and explanation of the relationships between the commonly recognized basic attributes and their relation to the divine essence. In an earlier context (p. 43, 3) he had said to prove a point that God's being exists necessarily in its every aspect, but the statement is not further elaborated, and when he comes to discuss the essential attributes formally and as such he makes a point of saying that they transcend human understanding, wherefore it is impossible

to deal seriously with the matter here since to do so would require so lengthy a discussion as to be beyond the scope of this book (p. 136, 8f. and cp. pp. 131f.). It will be sufficient for our present purposes to give here only a few brief indications of what he says in *Iqtiṣād*.

In describing God's eternal attributes as such, he employs the traditional formula, saying that they are "distinguishable from His essence and are eternal and are subsistent in His essence" (*zāʾidatun ʿalā l-dhāti wa-qadīmatun wa-qāʾimatun bil-dhāt*),[31] though in his initial account of the ontology of these attributes (p. 131) he vehemently rejects the analysis of al-Bāqillānī and of al-Juwaynī in *Irshād* and *Shāmil,* with its assertion of ontologically distinct "states," in favor of the more common doctrine of the school and in language similar to that presented in al-Juwaynī's *R. al-Niẓāmiyyah* (pp. 24f.).[32] He gives, on the other hand, a definition of speech/speaking (p. 119, 1f.) which is virtually equivalent to that given by al-Mutawallī (*al-Mughnī,* p. 25, 21) and al-Juwaynī (*Irshād,* p. 104, 5ff.), and his discussion of command as an example of a mode of speech (pp. 118ff.) is generally along the lines of what one finds in the tradition. Only in arguing for the eternity of God's speaking does he make a statement which could be read as pointing to his later identification of it with God's knowledge (cp. *Iljām,* p. 69, 4). So too, the very brief treatment of the attributes of hearing and seeing (pp. 109f.) appears wholly traditional, and the basic intention of his account of how Moses can be said to have heard God's speaking directly (pp. 122ff.) and how it is valid to say that the blessed shall see God in the next life (pp. 67f.) are fundamentally compatible with what is found, for example, in ibn Fūrak's *Mushkil.*[33]

Created Beings, Material and Immaterial

Material Bodies

To what extent al-Ghazālī's conception of the basic ontology of created beings followed the teaching of the Ashʿarite school is by no means clear. The way he speaks of *jawāhir* in *Iqtiṣād* (pp. 28ff.) would seem to indicate that he retains the school's traditional atomism; and this would seem to be confirmed when he speaks, for example, of "the individual *jawhar*" (*al-jawhar al-fard*) and describes a body as being two *jawhars* which are conjoined (pp. 24, 9ff., and 39, 7f.)[34] and when he follows the traditional ontology in saying (p. 31, 8) that length (*al-ṭūl*) "is not an accident but rather an expression for a multiplicity of *jawhars* disposed in a single direction." On the other hand, he closes the extended explanation of the nature of accidents (pp. 26ff.) by offering length as his example, an example which, he says, is sufficient to give a general idea of what he means (*muqarribun li-gharaḍinā ʾilā l-faham*), even though it is not properly speaking a genuine instance of what he is talking about (p. 31, 9f.). In common parlance, this is a *taqrīb,* that is, the presentation of an approximate idea of a principle by means of a superficial analogy employed in elementary instruction—another indication of the level of discourse intended in *Iqtiṣād*. Al-Ghazālī then proceeds immediately (p. 31, 11f.) to apologize for the disproportionate detail of his exposition on the grounds that "this going into detail and precise explanation" (*al-tadqīq wal-taḥqīq*) was required because "what has been said on the subject is neither satisfactory nor clear (*ghayru muqanniʿin wa-lā shāf*)." For reasons that we shall see shortly, one of his aims here might well have been to eliminate the occupation of space from the conception and definition of the *jawhar* as such, for he says (p. 31, 3ff.), "the accident's being specifically characterized by its substrate is not something distinct from the essence of accident as is the *jawhar*'s being characterized by its occupation of space and this is for the reason we mentioned, sc., that the intellect knows the *jawhar* alone and by itself and through it knows the occupation of space, not that the intellect knows the *jawhar* through the occupation of space." He doesn't tell us, however, exactly what it is about the traditional conception of accidents that he finds unsatisfactory, though it is clear from what he says in *Miʿyār* (p. 177, 5ff.) that he does not approve of describing as "accidents" what the falāsifa call "substantial forms", e.g., of describing air and water as "accidents".[35] He intimates clearly enough that the traditional conception of accidents needs to be changed, qualified, or nuanced, but is unwilling to do this in plain and unambiguous terms here in *Iqtiṣād,* and instead offers the reader several pages of somewhat inconclusive rigmarole. In the section of *Miḥakk* devoted to the definition of motion (pp. 126ff.), on the other hand, al-Ghazālī speaks much more clearly and succinctly. He distinguishes permanent, "concomitant" accidents from those that are not permanent and gives a definition of accident as such (p. 127, 16) that

superficially resembles those of the Ashʿarite school: the accident is "a contingent being whose existence requires a locus" (*ḥādithun yastadʿī wujūduhu maḥallan*). The usual Ashʿarite definitions and characterizations, however, normally speak of the accident's subsisting in a *jawhar* (e.g., *Tamhīd,* pp. 18, 4ff., and 195, 14, and *Sharḥ al-Irshād,* fol. 47v, 19) or in a body (*Inṣāf,* p. 17, 4) or in "an entity that occupies space" (*dhātun mutaḥayyizah*) (*Shāmil* [69], p. 185, 18f.). Al-Ghazālī's purpose in using '*maḥall*' here may be to allow for entities that do not occupy space, that is, for the rational soul.[36] That he conceives accidents more along the lines of the falāsifa than of the mutakallimūn does not, however, alone and of itself, necessarily indicate that he espoused Avicenna's conception of *jawhar* and *ʿaraḍ* formally and completely. In *Miḥakk* (p. 104, 12f.) he divides attributes into three classes, essential, concomitant, and accidental (*al-ṣifatu l-dhātiyyatu wal-lāzimatu wal-ʿaraḍiyyah*). One notes, however, that neither in *Miḥakk* nor in the section devoted to logic in *Mustaṣfā,* which closely follows *Miḥakk,* often verbatim, nor in *Qisṭās,* does he present the traditional Aristotelian list of accidents.

In the section of *Miḥakk* concerning the definition of motion (pp. 138ff.) al-Ghazālī seems to speak in traditional Ashʿarite terms. Here, he describes motion and rest as specifications of the *jawhar* to a given location in space (*ikhtiṣāṣu l-jawhar bi-ḥayyiz*) and gives an account based on its being in the same or different spaces at one or more moments in time (*ʾaḥwāl*). Most notably, in this regard, he says (p. 138, 16ff.) that one has here to recognize three things, the *kawn,* and motion, and rest. With this he speaks of those who hold the true doctrine (*ʾahlu l-ḥaqq,* a common phrase used by the Ashʿarites to describe themselves) and against al-Juwaynī, prefers the teaching of al-Bāqillānī and abū Isḥāq al-Isfarāʾīnī, who recognize a *kawn* (a being in a specific location in space) distinct from motion and from rest which characterizes the *jawhar* at the instant of its creation (cf., e.g., *Shāmil* [69], p. 433, 7ff.).

The subsequent discussion in *Iqtiṣād* of how *jawāhir* and accidents cease to exist seems similarly to follow traditional teaching. The *jawāhir,* he says (p. 37, 14f.), cease to exist in the event that neither motion nor rest, which are the condition of their existence, are created in them. This is one of several Ashʿarite positions regarding the question.[37] Again following traditional Ashʿarite tradition, he says

(p. 37, 5f.) that accidents "cease to exist of themselves (*bi-ʾanfusihā*) and what we mean by 'of themselves' is that it is inconceivable that their essences (*dhawātuhā*) have permanence of existence (*baqāʾ*)." Similarly, he says (p. 214, 1) that "accidents in our view do not have permanence of existence (*lā yabqā*) . . . and what exists in each hour is another accident." The formulations plainly imitate the traditional language of the Ashʿarite school, but what al-Ghazālī means by '*al-baqāʾ*' is not altogether clear, nor is it clear just how, within the framework of his cosmology, it may come about that a material entity may cease to be either in motion or at rest. Too, the use of 'in each hour' (*sāʿah*) rather than the usual 'in each succeding instant' (*ḥālan baʿda ḥāl, fī kulli waqt*) is curious and seems to be a kind of hedge, for, as we have noted, in *Miḥakk* he says explicitly that the definition of accidents as what does not continue to exist or as that whose continuance in existence is impossible is inadequate (*mukhtall*), noting that concomitant accidents endure as long as their subjects continue to exist (p. 127, 2ff.; cf. also, e.g., ibid., pp. 25f. and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 14, 1ff.).

Al-Ghazālī seems to follow the traditional teaching of the school also when he says (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 24, 7f.), "by 'world' we mean every existent other than God and by 'every existent other than God' we mean all bodies and their accidents," and a few pages later (p. 26, 8), "we mean here by 'the world' simply bodies and *jawhars.*" The statement that the created universe consists of "bodies and their accidents" appears problematic initially, but since he has indicated that in *Iqtiṣād* he does not intend to take up the ontology of created beings formally and subsequently states (p. 215) that it would be inappropriate to discuss the soul in this work,[38] it can be read as an abridged formulation. Even the short manuals seldom fail to mention the *jawhar* as a distinct class of entities (e.g., *Tamhīd,* pp. 17, 8f. and 22, 4f., al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl,* p. 33, 14f., *Fuṣūl,* §1, *ʿAqīdah,* p. 63, 4f., and *Irshād,* p. 17, 6). Al-Bāqillānī says (*Tamhīd,* p. 22, 4f.) that all classes of created beings fall under two principal categories, sc., accidents and atoms. Atoms are not mentioned in al-Isfarāʾīnī's catechetical *ʿaqīdah* (§IV, 1ff.), however, and al-Ashʿarī in *Thaghr* (p. 65) speaks simply of "the world and the bodies and accidents that are in it" (*al-ʿālamu bi-mā fīhi min ʾajsāmihi wa-ʾaʿrāḍihi,*[39] and so also the dogmatic formulation of al-Ḥallāj (*Akhbār* no. 13, p. 31, 2f. = *Risālah* 1, pp. 45f.) speaks only of bodies and accidents. Moreover, since in *Iqtiṣād* al-Ghazālī

excludes formal discussion of either the rational soul as such or the immaterial entities that make up the celestial world, the statement does, in a narrow kind of way, reflect the orientation of his focus in this work. Read within the context of traditional Ashᶜarite manuals, which the formulations evoke, these statements would seem, in any case, to be fairly plain and unambiguous. This is to assume, of course, that by '*jawhar*' here he means atom as generally understood in the school. And this would seem likely to be justified, as he says, for example (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 77, 5), that "*jawhars* form a single class and their becomings, which are particular modes of being in places, belong to a single class" (*al-jawāhiru mutamāthilatun wa-ʾakwānuhā l-latī hiya khtiṣāṣuhā bil-ʾaḥyāzi mutamāthilah*).[40]

In *Iḥyāʾ* and later works, however, al-Ghazālī speaks of the celestial realm (*al-malakūt, ᶜālamu l-ghaybi wal-malakūt*) with its angelic functionaries, each of which has its own "station" (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 119, 5ff.), as very different from the sublunary world (*al-mulk, ᶜālamu l-shahādah)*, and he says (*Mishkāh*, p. 65) that the two may be described, respectively, as "spiritual" and "corporeal" (*rūḥānī* and *jismānī*), or as "intellectual" and "sensible" (*ᶜaqlī* and *ḥissī*). He describes the human soul (mind, intellect) as an individual locus of intellectual cognition on which an angelic intellect impresses the forms of the essential natures of things (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3, 10ff.). Is the angelic agent which gives the human intellect the true forms also a body or a single *jawhar* that occupies space? If all these beings, as creatures and so as constituents of the world, are ontologically bodies or single *jawhars* with their particular accidents and differ only by their accidents, how specifically are they different as belonging to distinct realms? One has to ask, therefore, (1) if al-Ghazālī in fact conceives the *jawhar* in exactly the same way as did the Ashᶜarite school, if, that is, he conceives the *jawāhir* as forming a single class in the sense that every *jawhar* is essentially the same as every other *jawhar,* or if (2) he recognizes several distinct subclasses, or if (3) he uses the term equivocally (cf., e.g., *Miᶜyār,* pp. 176f. and cp. *Ḥudūd,* pp. 87f.). The expression '*mutamāthil*' normally means "alike" or "the same" in the sense of being identical in all essential properties and characteristics, but when al-Ghazālī employs the expression to describe the *ʾakwān*, he plainly does not mean to assert that motion and rest are altogether identical, but only to say that the *ʾakwān* belong to one and the same

class of accidents (*tatajānas*).[41] His comments in *Miᶜyār* on the use of 'accident' by the mutakallimūn to describe what the falāsifa would call *jawhars* or essential forms (*ṣuwar*) could be taken thus to indicate that he recognizes more than one kind or class of *jawhar;* or it may be that he is simply acknowledging the presence of diverse sets of formal expressions (cf. *Miḥakk,* p. 48, 12ff.) and the consequent equivocity of the word.

In categorizing beings (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 24, 9f.) al-Ghazālī says, "Every existent either occupies space (*mutaḥayyiz*) or does not occupy space and if there is no composition (*ʾītilāf*) in that which occupies space we call it a single *jawhar,* while if it is joined in composition to another we call it a body (*jism*)."[42] Similarly, in *Miḥakk* he says:

> When you describe body as what occupies space (*al-mutaḥayyiz*) you find it to be coëxtensive, neither more extensive nor less, since every body occupies space and everything that occupies space is a body. This follows the view of those who hold that whatever occupies space is divisible. For our part, however, we ascribe occupying space to *jawhars* and hold that 'what occupies space' is coëxtensive with ['*jawhar*'] (p. 24, reading *al-mutaḥayyiz* for *al-taḥayyuz* in line 10).

Again, later in the same work (p. 106), having noted that in formal usage 'existent' does not enter into essential definitions, he goes on to say:

> According to what we believe (*naᶜtaqiduhū*), however, '*jawhar*' does enter into the quiddity, since we understand it as what occupies space, i.e., as an essential reality (*ḥaqīqatun dhātiyyah*), so that in our view the more universal class is *jawhar* and is divided into body and non-body, i.e., the single *jawhar* (*al-jawhar al-fard*). The logicians [i.e., the falāsifa], however, employ '*jawhar*' to refer to what exists not in a substrate (*mawḍūᶜ*), but since existence does not belong to the essence it does not become essential when 'not in a substrate' is added, since this is a pure negation, so that their terminology is valid according to their understanding and belief, though not according to our understanding and belief.[43]

One notes, however, that nowhere in *Iqtiṣād,* or elsewhere that I have noted, does al-Ghazālī say of the *jawhar* that as such it has volume (*ḥajm*), as does al-Juwaynī, who holds that whatever occupies space has volume (e.g., *Irshād,* p. 17) and defines the *jawhar* as a vol-

ume (*ḥajm*) (*Shāmil* [81], p. 54, 20f.); and only once that I have noted (*Miḥakk*, p. 141, 9) does al-Ghazālī employ the verb '*shaghala, yashghalu*' so as to describe the *jawhar* as "filling a space," as is common in the Ashᶜarite manuals; nor does he say explicitly that it has surface area.[44] In the common usage of kalām, '*ḥayyiz*' is used to mean a portion of space (e.g., *Shāmil* [69], p. 156, 15ff.) and is associated with the volume of a *jawhar*, and '*mutaḥayyiz*' accordingly means "occupies space" in the sense of filling a volume of space into which another cannot intrude so long as what fills it remains there.[45] Presumably, this is what al-Ghazālī understands by the term. The evidence would seem to indicate, thus, that regarding the nature of material bodies, al-Ghazālī likely follows the basic atomism of the Ashᶜarite school. Confirmation of this may perhaps be found where, in *Miḥakk* (p. 136; translated on p. 60 below), the separate parts (*ʾajzāʾ*) of the pneuma are described as *ʾarwāḥ* (pneumas)—if the argument there is not entirely dialectical, which it may well be. It is notable in any event that al-Ghazālī does not speak of matter and form in his own voice.

Returning to the formulation of *Iqtiṣād* (p. 24) concerning bodies and *jawāhir*, one notes that it is not unlike what he says in *Miᶜyār* (p. 171) concerning the usage of the mutakallimūn, that is, that "they use '*jawhar*' particularly for the single *jawhar* which occupies space (*mutaḥayyiz*) and is indivisible, while that which is divisible they call a body, not a *jawhar*.[46] It will, then, be the case according to al-Ghazālī that any being which is not an accident and which, as such (as an independent being—*mawjūdun qāʾimun bi-nafsihī*) is but a single *jawhar*, is by definition not a body and so is, in the strict sense of the term, incorporeal (*ghayru jismānī*). The statement, then, that the created universe is made up of "bodies and *jawāhir*" (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 26, 8) and his division of the universe into the terrestrial, which is the corporeal in nature, and the celestial, which is spiritual (i.e., incorporeal), may be read as consistent one with the other if the angelic intelligences which he ascribes to the celestial realm are understood to consist each of but a single *jawhar*. That is, the formulation "bodies and *jawāhir*" is consistent with the traditional terminology, in that body is a divisible entity and the single *jawhar* is not; and moreover, traditional Ashᶜarite doctrine holds, against the Muᶜtazila, that life, cognition, and the power of voluntary action can exist in a single *jawhar* (cf., e.g., *Shāmil* [69], pp. 419f. and *Ghunyah*, foll. 102v, 18ff., and 154r, 12ff.;

and cp. *Mujarrad*, p. 207, 10–17). Through all of this, however, al-Ghazālī conspicuously avoids asserting the traditional thesis that created beings must either occupy space or reside in subjects that occupy space (*ʾimmā mutaḥayyizun ʾaw-ḥāllun fīhī*), as does al-Juwaynī, who argues against the notion of the rational soul and the separated intelligences as beings that are not located in space (*Ikhtiṣār*, fol. 206r). On the contrary, as we noted earlier, in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 31, 3ff.) he makes a point of eliminating 'occupies space' (*mutaḥayyiz*) from the definition of *jawhar*, though he avoids any discussion of immaterial beings.

The Rational Soul

In this connection one has, however, also to consider a later passage of *Iqtiṣād* where, discussing the resurrection and "the punishment of the grave," al-Ghazālī makes a point of denying something he had said in an earlier work with regard to the human soul. Here (p. 215, 1ff.), he says:

> We treated this question at length in *Tahāfut*, where, in refuting their doctrine, we proceeded by affirming that the soul, which, according to them, does not occupy space (*ghayru mutaḥayyizah*), continues to exist and by positing its return to the governance of the body, whether this be the very same body or another. This argument, however, does not conform to what we believe to be true, for that work was composed in order to refute their doctrine, not in order to assert the true doctrine. Rather, since they presume that what a man is he is with respect to the soul and that his involvement in governing the body is like something that belongs to him accidentally (*kal-ᶜāriḍi lahū*) and the body is an instrument for him (*ʾālatun lahū*), we forced them to admit that, given their belief that the soul does not die, they have to assert the resurrection, i.e., the return of the soul to the governance of a body.

That is, as the basis of the argument in *Tahāfut* (pp. 362ff.) he accepted their theses that (a) the soul does not die, that (b) its relation to the body which it governs does not belong to it essentially but only temporarily, but rather (c) it uses the body as an instrument, in order to show that one must assert that the soul returns to govern a body

(*badanun mina l-ʾabdān*). He says that the premises of the argument do not correspond to his own belief concerning what is true. Because of the way the paragraph is cast, however, it is not immediately clear exactly what element or elements of the premises of the argument or its conclusion he may reject or accept. The ensuing discussion is vanishingly brief and wholly unenlightening as he concludes the section immediately by saying (p. 215, 8–11):

> To examine the substance of this matter at present would involve an investigation of the pneuma and the soul and life and their essential natures (*ḥaqāʾiquhā*), but [the restriction of the present work to] the basic tenets doesn't allow for going to great length regarding intellectual matters. Accordingly, what we have said gives sufficient clarity to the appropriate mean of Muslim doctrine (*al-iqtiṣād fī l-iʿtiqād*)[47] for one to assert the truth of the revelation.

In other words, his views concerning the nature of the human soul are at variance with the common teaching of the school theologians, and he does not wish to discuss the matter in *Iqtiṣād*.

One could take his apology to indicate that al-Ghazālī rejects one or all of the major elements of what he cites as the position of the falāsifa. His apparent denial of the immateriality of the soul (i.e., that it is *ghayru mutaḥayyizah*) certainly fits with his earlier statements that the entire created universe consists of "bodies and their accidents." Elsewhere, however, he says (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 478, 14ff.):

> Man, in the strict and proper sense (*bil-ḥaqīqah*), is that (*al-maʿnā*) which perceives cognitions and pains and pleasures; and this neither dies nor ceases to exist. The meaning of death is the termination of his use of the body and the body's ceasing to be an instrument for him. . . . The essential reality of man is his soul and spirit and this continues to exist permanently (*ḥaqīqatu l-ʾinsāni nafsuhu wa-rūḥuhū wa-hiya bāqiyah*).[48]

The spirit or soul is distinct from the physical spirit or pneuma, which is the subtle (i.e., invisible) vapor (*al-bukhār al-laṭīf*) studied by physicians (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3, 24ff., and 4, p. 113, 4ff. and 19ff.). The pneuma is associated with the blood (*ibid.*, p. 112, 7f.).[49] The rational soul "is an invisible, holy (*rabbāniyyah*), and spiritual entity which has a connection with the bodily heart; this invisible entity is the essential reality of the human individual; it is that which of man perceives

and has rational knowledge and spiritual insight" (*tilka l-laṭīfatu hiya ḥaqīqatu l-ʾinsāni wa-hwa l-mudriku l-ʿālimu l-ārifu mina l-ʾinsān*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3, 16f.). The relationship of the intellectual soul to the corporeal heart "corresponds to the relationship of accidents to bodies and of attributes to the things they qualify (*al-ʾawṣāfu bil-mawṣūfāt*), or to the relationship of what uses an instrument to the instrument, or to the relationship of what is in a place (*al-mutamakkin*) to the place," but al-Ghazālī refuses to detail his thought on this, saying that it is a matter belonging properly to the higher speculative sciences (*ʿulūmu l-mukāshafah*) while this is a work on practical (sc., ethical) sciences (*ʿulūmu l-muʿāmalah*) (p. 3, 18ff.).[50] Later, he remarks that led by imagination and impressions formed on sense experience (*al-takhayyul wal-wahm*), people get confused when they try to think about the intellectual soul in terms of *jawars* and accidents; a special kind of enlightenment, one of a higher level than ordinary intellectual perception, is required in order to understand it (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 112, 19ff.). Death may occur through proximate causes that are either interior to the body or exterior, but in either case it takes place "through causes that are determined in God's knowledge and are ordered with respect to one another" (*bi-ʾasbābin muqaddaratin fī ʿilmi llāhi murattibatah*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 112, 10ff.). "What is meant by 'death' is a man's being taken away from his possessions and thrust into another world which is not homologous with this world" (*ʾilā ʿālamin ʾākhara lā yunāsibu hādhā l-ʿālam*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, 478, 21f.) The death of a man is not the same as that of an animal. Concerning the former, he says (*ibid.*, p. 477f.),

> Some people think that by death he ceases to exist and so long as he remains in the grave neither suffers pain through any punishment nor experiences delight in any reward until he is brought back on the day of the assembly. Others think that the spirit continues to exist (*bāqiyah*) and does not pass out of existence through death and that it is spirits alone which undergo reward and punishment, not bodies, as these are neither raised up nor summoned together at all. These are all views which are incorrect and deviate from the truth. On the contrary, what is testified to by means of logical reasoning (*turuq al-iʿtibār*) and by the verses of Scripture and the Prophetic Traditions is that the meaning of death is simply a change of state (*taghayyuru ḥāl*) and that the spirit continues to exist after its separation from the body. . . . The meaning of its being separated

> from the body is the termination of its use of the body by the body's ceasing to be obedient to it. . . . The spirit has cognition of itself without any instrument (*bi-nafsihā min ghayri ʾālah*) and for this reason it may of itself suffer the pain of various kinds of misery, affliction, and grief and experience the pleasure of various kinds of delight and joy. . . . Nor is it implausible that the spirit be returned to the body in the grave. . . .

Al-Ghazālī seems to consider the soul to be a single *jawhar*. In speaking of the possibility of the reported "punishment of the grave," he says (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 487, 9–12):

> The intellect . . . has neither length nor breadth; indeed [this being] which in itself is indivisible is what apprehends beings (*al-mudriku lil-ʾashyāʾ*); if a man's bodily members were all dispersed and there remained only the perceptive particle which has no parts and is indivisible, man, who is endowed with intellect (*al-ʾinsān al-ʿāqil*), would yet subsist and continue to exist in his entirety (*bi-kamālihī*) and it is thus that he is after death, for death does not reside in this particle nor does non-existence befall it.

The terms he uses here to speak of the rational soul are those employed traditionally in the Ashʿarite school to speak of the atoms: it is a particle that is not constituted of smaller particles and therefore is indivisible (*al-juzʾu . . . al-ladhī lā yatajazzaʾu wa-lā yanqasim*) though one in which death (an accident in the traditional analysis) does not reside or inhere (*lā yaḥulluhū*). And the verb he uses in saying that nonexistence does not befall this particle, '*ṭaraʾa, yaṭraʾu*', is commonly employed in traditional kalām to speak of one accident's supplanting its contrary in the atom which is its subject or substrate (cp. *Miḥakk*, p. 107). So too, the soul seems to be spoken of as an atom or particle in *Iḥyāʾ* (4, p. 299, 27–28), where he says, "the heart [i.e., the rational soul] is distinct from all the other parts of the body (*mufāriqun li-sāʾiri ʾajzāʾi l-badan*) by virtue of an attribute by which it apprehends (*yudriku*) meanings which are neither imaginable nor perceptible, such as the apprehension of the creation of the world or of its need for a creator. . . ."[51] What seems to be implied here is stated explicitly in *Jawāhir* (p. 11), where al-Ghazālī says that the rational soul is one of the elemental parts that make up the totality of the human individual (*min jumlati ʾajzāʾi l-ʾādamī*).[52] According

to these descriptions, the rational soul will be incorporeal by definition, in that it is a single *jawhar*, not a conglomerate of two or more *jawhars* (*ʾajzāʾ*) that are joined through a formal bonding or conjunction (*ʾiʾtilāf, taʾlīf*). Nor is it so bound to any of the elemental parts that make up formally and as such the body which it inhabits. On the other hand, it is not immediately clear what al-Ghazālī means when he says (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3) that the relationship of the rational soul to the corporeal heart is analogous to that of "accidents to bodies and of attributes to the things they qualify." He explicitly acknowledges the problematic nature of this characterization (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 112), however, and this description of the soul's relation to the body would appear to be a kind of elementary *taqrīb*, as al-Mutawallī (p. 57, 3f.), for example, speaks of the pneuma as "an attribute which subsists in the body" (*ṣifatun taqūmu fī l-jismi*), since it is the pneuma which causes the body to be alive (*mūjibun lil-ḥayāh*).[53] Though, as we have seen, he says that it governs the body through the brain, al-Ghazālī nonetheless formally and explicitly associates the soul with the heart, as he says in *Iḥyāʾ* (3, p. 3) that the soul has a connection (*taʿalluq*) with the bodily heart and that it is "in the heart" (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3, and *Mishkāh*, p. 43), even though some of the operations of its faculties may take place in other organs, as, for example, imagination (*al-takhayyul*) resides in the brain (e.g., *Miḥakk*, p. 27, 4ff., and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 34, 2ff.), as does the estimative faculty as well (*Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 46, 15).[54] We should note here a passage in *Miḥakk* (pp. 27f., repeated in *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 34) in which al-Ghazālī says that in addition to imagination and *wahm*, "there is a third, noble faculty here by which man is distinguished from the animals, which is named 'intellect' and whose locus (*maḥall*) is either in the brain or the heart; those who consider the soul to be an independent being that does not occupy space (*jawharun qāʾimun bi-dhātihī ghayru mutaḥayyiz*) say that the locus (*maḥall*) of the intellect is the soul."[55] The passage is somewhat curious. The initial statement seems, on first reading, to be that of the author, as he asserts, seemingly in his own voice, that the locus of the intellect is either in the heart or the brain. The doctrine indicated is manifestly that of the mutakallimūn, for whom intellection (*al-ʿaql*) is an accident which subsists in a material subject. (Note, however, that al-Ghazālī here terms it a "power/faculty": *quwwah*.) Later in *Miḥakk*, however, he makes his intention clear when he takes

up the question of the nature of life and the pneuma and the soul (pp. 132ff.), something he will decline to do in *Iqtiṣād,* written only a short time later. Here in *Miḥakk* he sets forth several views of the ontology of life in the living human individual. The first is that God creates sense, volition, the power to act, etc., in the body and, given these attributes, it is said to be alive or, according to others, that God creates in the body an attribute called life which is the condition of the reception of sensation, the power to act, etc. He does not bother to say that these views are those of various mutakallimūn, but notes simply that they are inadequate. The second view, which follows the doctrines of the physicians, is that in addition to the accident, life there must be something else, namely, "the pneuma which is an invisible body in the heart and the brain and which flows to the other parts of the body through the arteries. As for 'soul', however, it has no proper referent." The third view, held by some, is that in addition to life and the pneuma there is something else, "an independent entity (*mawjūdun qā'imun bi-nafsihī*) which does not occupy space." Subsequently, he details this third view (pp. 136f.), stating that there is a third party who recognize the existence of the pneuma, but go on to say,

> this pneuma, however, is in the body and there is here another entity, referred to as the soul, which is such that it is an independent being (*qā'imun bi-nafsihī*) that does not occupy space and whose relation to the body is that of God to the world, neither within the world nor outside of it. They point out that the pneuma is a divisible body and that its parts resemble one another, so that if it were that which in man governs and has mental perception, this would belong to each of the many individual pneumas and it would be possible that there be in its parts (*'ajzā'uhā*) both the knowledge of something <and ignorance of it> and it would both know it and not know it. Accordingly, there must be something that is throughout [the whole body] and is indivisible. But every body is divisible. (They claim that a body which is not divisible into parts is logically impossible.) Along with this they raise the question of how the pneuma could go free and remain in place during sleep. If it were to leave the body during sleep, [the body] would be dead, not alive. And, since imaginings and knowledge that are not accessible by way of ordinary sight are true (*ṣaḥīḥah*), they claim that no body that is separable from the sleeper leaves him, for were it to return to him it would, since bodies don't interpenetrate one another, enter some aperture and if the sleeper's mouth and nose were held fast shut and then he were awakened, he would wake up. In this connection, they take innumerable things into consideration. They say also that if there were only the body and the pneuma, the Prophet would have said so. An invisible body is something that is readily understood (*mafhūm*); the only thing that is not readily understood [p. 137] is an entity (*mawjūd*) that is neither inside the body nor outside it. The first group [sc., the mutakallimūn] say this is logically impossible, since the negation is the assertion of a contingent entity that is neither inside nor outside the body, something that is logically impossible. This is the order of their reasoning. If you ask what position is in fact true in this matter, know that those who are asked concerning the spirit[56] either don't know, in which case no clear answer is possible, or they do know and so are not allowed to go into the matter, for the spirit is God's mystery (*sirr Allāh*), just as being eternal is God's mystery and God's Apostle (prayer and peace be upon him) did not grant permission to go into an explanation of it. . . . Anyone who is ignorant of the spirit does not know himself,[57] so how can he think that he knows God and His angels and grasps the knowledge of the first people and the last, not having come to know himself.

Here, as often elsewhere in *Miḥakk* as well as in other works, al-Ghazālī presents several distinct views on the topic, but this time, though explicitly rejecting none of the three, he nonetheless gives a fairly clear indication of where his own preference lies. He knows but is not free to divulge the truth of the matter explicitly. The soul does not occupy space; it is an immaterial entity. Later, he will be more explicit, in *Mishkāh* (p. 44), when he says that one cannot talk of the soul as of bodies in terms of near and far, compares it to "God's light," and cites the Tradition, "God created Adam in his own form (*'alā ṣūratihī*)."[58] In this section of *Miḥākk,* al-Ghazālī does not name either the falāsifa or those of the mutakallimūn who hold the other two views that he mentions. (The physicians are named, but only as those whose science is the origin of the position regarding life held by the great majority of the orthodox school theologians. It is not altogether implausible that al-Ghazālī takes the trouble to name them at all in order obliquely to call the attention of his readers to the fact

that certain of their commonly accepted doctrines originate in pagan antiquity (cp. *Munqidh*, pp. 102f.). In an earlier passage, however, where he treats the question of how knowledge of the conclusion follows from that of the premises (*Miḥakk*, pp. 76f. and *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 52ff.), he explicitly associates the various positions mentioned with those who hold them, namely, the Muʿtazila, the Ashʿarites ("our fellows"), and the falāsifa. The position of the latter, he says, is that it takes place through "the mind's having been made ready through the presence of the premises together with this understanding for the emanation of the conclusion from the giver of intelligible forms, which is the agent intellect."[59] Here, the indication al-Ghazālī gives of his own position is somewhat less direct than in his discussion of life and the soul. He notes that neither the theses of "our fellows" nor that of the falāsifa make the achievement of the knowledge of the conclusion an effect caused directly by the human agent's own power of acting, apparently thus rejecting the position of the Muʿtazila, and he concludes by telling the reader that he ought not to concern himself with the usual and generally accepted doctrines but rather with those that clearly convey the truth (*lā yanbaghī ʾan yakūna shaghluka bil-kalāmi l-muʿtādi l-mashhūr, bal bil-kalāmi l-mufīdi l-mūḍiḥ*) (*Miḥakk*, p. 77, 5ff. = *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 53f.).[60]

When al-Ghazālī says that the soul of itself has cognition without any instrument (*taʿlamu l-ʾashyāʾa bi-nafsihā min ghayri ʾālah*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 478, 5; cp. *Mishkāh*, p. 44, 3ff.), he obviously does not mean that it has this knowledge per se, since its knowledge is received passively from the angel which serves as the agent intellect.[61] He means rather that it is itself the immediate recipient and locus (*maḥall*) of the intellectual perception that it is given. He does not speak of intellectual perception (*al-ʾidrāk*) or cognition (*al-ʿilm, al-maʿrifah*) explicitly as an "accident", but following his description of the soul as a *jawhar*, this would not be inconsistent. Life, on the other hand, is the condition of cognition (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 87, 4f.). Al-Ghazālī does not say that life is present as an accident in the rational soul. The assertions that after the death of the body, the soul continues in existence (*tabqā*) as a perceiving and knowing subject and does not die and that death does not reside in it, do not necessarily imply that of and in itself as such it has life and is immortal, but this is nevertheless almost certainly what he means. When, following the usage of the

Ashʿarite theologians, he says in *Iqtiṣād* that accidents endure only for a time, he is speaking specifically in terms of the body, not of the soul. In *Miḥakk* (e.g., pp. 25f.), *Mustaṣfā* (e.g., 1, p. 13), and elsewhere, as we have seen, he speaks of attributes (*ṣifah*) which, though not elements of the essences of their subjects, belong to them, nonetheless, as concomitant properties (*lawāzim*) and are, therefore, permanent in them so long as they exist.[62] It would seem likely that it is thus that he considers life to be in the rational soul, though he may well consider it an essential attribute.

When al-Ghazālī speaks in his own voice (*Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 478) of the soul's using (*taṣarrafa*) the body and says (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 3) that it employs (*istaʿmala*) the body as a tool or instrument (*ʾālah*) (cf. also *Mishkāh*, p. 79, 1ff.), it is clear enough that he is in fundamental agreement with the position presented as that of the falāsifa in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 215, 5f.),[63] wherefore one must ask exactly why in this passage he does not merely refuse to go into the question of "the spirit and the soul and life and their essential natures" but apologizes for having accepted the doctrine of the falāsifa as the basis of an argument against them in *Tahāfut*.

We have, then, to look more closely at the whole discussion of the possibility of the resurrection in *Iqtiṣād*. He begins (p. 213) by saying that God has the power to create anew a being He once created but which has ceased to exist as such. To a question as to whether the *jawhars* and accidents are both re-created or only the accidents, he says that in principle either is possible, but he examines only the latter case. The body, he says, "continues to exist having the form (*ṣūrah*) of dust, for example, while life, color, dampness, composition (*tarkīb*) and disposition (*hayʾah*) and a whole set of other accidents cease to exist in it";[64] and that what is meant by creating anew (*al-ʾiʿādah*) is that either these very same accidents or accidents identical to them are created, "for life in our view is an accident and accidents do not have permanence of existence, but what exists in each hour is another accident." In the resurrection, then, the individual lives again with the restoration of life, and the other requisite accidents, to the original material constituents of the earthly body. Concerning the other alternative, i.e., that the original body, too, is created anew, al-Ghazālī draws out the distinction between creating an identically similar body and creating anew the very same body, but says that it

would take too long to go into the issue here. It is at this point that he offers his apology for having adopted the position of the falāsifa in his counterargument in *Tahāfut*. One facet of the problem is clear enough. Al-Ghazālī here presents the traditional conception of the question of the resurrection, according to which man is conceived as a body having a particular structure and configuration (e.g., *Mujarrad*, pp. 146, 4ff., and 291, 9ff., and *Tamhīd*, §329) and the individual is identified with the body (or more narrowly as every particle in which there is life; e.g., *Ghunya*, fol. 156r, 17), wherefore it must be in some way that the very same body comes to exist again at the last judgment (e.g., *Mujarrad*, p. 146, 15ff.). In *Iqtiṣād*, however, he is not concerned to go into the complexities of this view. (The restoration of the "accident" of life will involve the reintroduction of the pneuma, etc.) In the traditional school theology, the *nafs* is not the individual human subject, the locus of cognition, volition, experience, etc.,[65] so that the acceptance in *Tahāfut* of the thesis that the soul continues to exist as such and that the possibility of the resurrection is given with the possibility of its being restored to "a body" (*badanun mina l-ʾabdān*), that is, to whatever body that can be appropriately governed by the soul, is inconsistent and incompatible with traditional school doctrine. That, given the doctrine of the immortality of the rational soul, the question of having or not having the exact same body becomes to some extent, if not essentially, irrelevant is important in this context. Moreover, the Neoplatonic view of the soul espoused by the falāsifa is attacked by al-Anṣārī in his *Ghunyah* (fol. 151v), and this, certainly, is not irrelevant in the background and context of al-Ghazālī's relation to the school. The studied apology for the procedure of *Tahāfut* and his overtly distancing himself from a conception of the rational soul which he in fact holds to be true would seem to indicate that there had been some direct and explicit criticism of this part of *Tahāfut*. Criticism concerning what he said or may have implied concerning the resurrection would be a particularly serious matter, because the doctrine of the resurrection is one of the primary articles of faith (one of the *ʾuṣūl al-dīn*) about which diversity of interpretation is, in principle, not allowed. In this connection one notes with what care he formulates his conclusions concerning the punishment of the grave in *Iḥyāʾ* (4, pp. 484f.), where he says:

> There are three levels of assent to things such as this. The first is the most obvious and the soundest and the safest (*al-ʾaẓharu wal-ʾaṣaḥḥu wal-ʾaslam*),[66] namely that you assent to the proposition that [these snakes] exist and bite the deceased. You can't really see this, however, because this [bodily] eye cannot see the things of the immaterial world (*al-ʾumūr al-malakūtiyyah*) and everything pertaining to the next life belongs to the immaterial world (*ʿālamu l-malakūt*). . . . The second is that you reflect on the case of one who is asleep and that during sleep he sometimes sees a snake which bites him and because of this senses pain to the point that you see his forehead sweat. . . . The third is that you know that snakes themselves do not cause pain, but rather what you feel that is from them is the poison and the poison, furthermore, is not the pain; your suffering is, rather, the effect (*al-ʾathar*) which takes place in you as a result of the poison. If this effect were to take place without the actual presence of the poison the suffering might even be greater. The fact is that it is impossible to make this sort of suffering known except by ascribing it to that which customarily brings it about. . . . My advice is neither to do a lot of speculation concerning the detail of this nor to preoccupy yourself with knowing it; preoccupy yourself rather with avoiding the punishment in whatever way it may occur.[67]

The circumspection of this statement is paralleled already at the beginning of *Iḥyāʾ* (1, pp. 20f.) where, speaking about knowledge of the immaterial world, the means of whose attainment he intends to present, he outlines various stages (*maqāmāt*) that people reach and occupy with respect to their understanding and conception of the nature of things such as the punishment of the grave, the next life, etc., once they have assented to the basic truths of the revelation. Here again, al-Ghazālī goes on to say (p. 21, 15f.) that "the knowledge of these things (*hādhihi l-ʿulūm*) is not written down in books and those whom God has blessed with some part of it communicate it only to those who are worthy of it (*ʾahluhū*)." That he speaks of "three levels of assent" and implies that each of the three has its own mode of validity is important. His treatment of this topic here in *Iḥyāʾ* may be a key to understanding his apparent denial in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 215) of something that manifestly he believes. He insists there on bodily resurrection in the same body, but does he really mean this

is to be taken in a strictly literal sense? To judge by how he treats the punishment of the grave in the passage we have just examined, one would suspect not. The statement made in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 215) that this is not the place to discuss "the pneuma and the soul and life and their essential natures" might easily be taken as referring the reader to the section of *Miḥakk* "Concerning the Definition of Life" (pp. 132ff.) where all three are discussed, particularly in view of the fact that he has explicitly referred to *Miḥakk* already in the fourth preface of *Iqtiṣād* (p. 15).

To return to our original question, then, al-Ghazālī plainly recognizes several classes of *jawhars,* that is, of contingent independent entities, the most basic division being between those which are material and occupy space and those which are immaterial and do not occupy space. In *Miḥakk* his description of the rational soul as '*jawharun qā'imun bi-nafsihi ghayru mutaḥayyiz*' is contextually presented in such a way as to suggest that the language of the formulation may not be his own. Elsewhere, however, he seems to describe the soul (or intellect) as a '*jawhar*' while speaking plainly in his own voice (e.g., *Iḥyā'* 4, p. 487; cited on p. 58 above). His tendency not to employ '*jawhar*' so commonly as a general equivalent of '*mawjūdun qā'imun bi-nafsihi*' may well be due to the fact that he wishes to avoid gratuitous usage of the terminology of the falāsifa. As we have seen, al-Ghazālī also employs '*ma'nā*' of the rational soul, but this is a very neutral expression having a very general sense of "thing" without any direct connotation that its referent is an entity, strictly speaking.[68] He also refers to the soul by '*'ayn*', a word which is often employed by the Ash'arites in the sense of an individual existent entity[69] and as an equivalent of '*dhāt*' and '*nafs*' and by the falāsifa as an equivalent of '*jawhar*'. Al-Ghazālī several times describes the rational soul by '*juz'*' (and '*juz'un lā yatajazza'*'), an expression which in traditional kalām designates the material atom as such. Used of the soul by al-Ghazālī, however, '*juz'*' plainly means an indivisible entity which, as such, is a discrete element of the living human composite. Al-Ghazālī's characterizations of bodies, on the other hand, consistently reflect the Ash'arite usage and seem plausibly to indicate the traditional atomism. In presenting his own views in his own voice he does not speak in the correlative terms of "matter" and "form." The statement in

Mi'yār (p. 171) that the mutakallimūn "use '*jawhar*' particularly for the single *jawhar* that occupies space and is indivisible" could be read as indicating that he recognizes the material atom and holds that bodies are not infinitely divisible. This does not, however, seem to have been a topic al-Ghazālī considered to be of central importance to his theology, and because of his tendency to employ traditional language wherever convenient, the evidence remains to some extent inconclusive. That he recognizes the existence of indivisible smallest parts of material bodies does not necessarily mean that he will reject the use of '*jawhar*' to describe a composite body or the idea that bodies (some bodies, at least) have natures (*ḥaqā'iq* or *khawāṣṣ*) or "forms".[70] '*Jawhar*' is equivocal.

The Rational Evidence of Prophecy

In *Iqtiṣād* al-Ghazālī says that the truth of the Prophet's message is not self-evident but is manifest through miracles (p. 195, 2f.), and he goes on (p. 198; cp. *Qudsiyyah,* p. 92, §10 = *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 113, 1ff.) to give the usual kalām arguments that the miracles worked on behalf of prophets are distinguishable from magic and things merely imagined. Elsewhere, however, he says (e.g., *Qisṭās,* pp. 66f. and *Munqidh,* pp. 149f.) that the evidential value of miracles is ambivalent, not to say inconclusive. He understands prophecy (*al-nubuwwah*) to be a level or mode of understanding which transcends that of ordinary experience and of conceptual reasoning, in which the soul comes to know things knowledge of which cannot be attained by any other means.[71] The fact of prophecy, he says, is evidenced in the occurrence of such phenomena as dreams in which remote or future events are presented either as such or in symbolic form (*Munqidh,* pp. 145f.), and, similarly, the original discovery of the particulars of medicine and astrology must have been prophetic (*Munqidh,* pp. 146f. and 161f.). Miracles are analogous insofar as they are manifest and publicly witnessed phenomena. The fact and truth of all other proper characteristics (*khawāṣṣ*) of prophecy, however, can be known only through one's own interior experience (*al-dhawq*) that is had by following the methods of the sufi way (*Munqidh,* p. 147, 16ff.). That is,

given one's own experience of direct spiritual enlightenment, he is able to recognize the presence of such enlightenment in another, just as one trained in medicine or law is able to recognize and distinguish an expert from one who is not; such knowledge is given in direct intuition (it is *ḍarūrī*) and is not subject to rational doubt (*Qisṭās*, pp. 66f. and *Munqidh*, pp. 147ff. and 161ff.). It is only in this way, that is, by being able to recognize the states of the soul (*ʾaḥwāl*) which are characteristic of prophecy, that one can be absolutely certain that a given individual is truly a prophet; and in confirmation of his thesis, al-Ghazālī cites a Tradition (*Qisṭās*, p. 67, 3f.) according to which the Prophet said, "you shall not know the truth through the man; know, rather, the truth and you shall recognize the one who has it." This al-Ghazālī does not bring up in *Iqtiṣād*, since it would be alien to the literary form and conventions of the kalām manual and also because the audience to which he considers such works to be properly addressed neither possess nor seek such higher levels of spiritual or intellectual perfection. What he says concerning prophecy here is of considerable significance for our understanding of al-Ghazālī's theology in that it is an explicit acknowledgment of the particular kind of nonrational foundation that underlies his often pretentious claims to rationally justified knowledge.

Al-Qudsiyyah

Regarding *al-Qudsiyyah*, it is important to keep in mind that when al-Ghazālī incorporates the work into the second book of *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, he has notified the reader already in Book I (e.g., pp. 20f. and 36f.) and again in Book II (p. 98, 28ff.) that higher knowledge of the true meaning of the revelation concerning creation, cosmology, the soul, etc., can be imparted only to those who are spiritually and intellectually prepared to receive it, and presumably the reader is not so prepared until he has fully absorbed what is contained in the first twenty books of the work, following which he will be introduced to an understanding of basic theological truths that is very different in form and conception from that set out in *al-Qudsiyyah*. It should be recalled here that, as we saw earlier, al-Ghazālī makes a point of disparaging kalām in a number of places in Books I and II of *Iḥyāʾ*.

In reading *R. al-Qudsiyyah* we find no such difficulties as we do in *Iqtiṣād*. The entire work is written in very traditional language, but in such a way that there is no conflict with the psychological, cosmological, and metaphysical doctrines that will follow it in *Iḥyāʾ*. The discussion of the human agent's power of acting and its relation to the occurrence of his "performance" (*kasb*) is formulated in very traditional terms (pp. 87ff. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 110, 13ff.). God creates (*ikhtaraʿa*) the action and also the act of the agent's power of voluntary action (*qudrah*), the choice and the thing chosen, wherefore it is God's act in its being created and is the human agent's performance in its coming to be as the object of his power of voluntary action. The formulation is that of the classical Ashʿarite manuals and so expressly evokes their doctrine. If, however, 'create' is understood in the formal sense in which al-Ghazālī employs it later in *Iḥyāʾ*, then the thesis asserted is altogether different from that intended by similarly formulated statements found in the traditional manuals.[72] Later, in discussing how it was that Muḥammad saw the angel Gabriel and heard his speaking while his companions did not, al-Ghazālī says (p. 92, ult. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, 113, 22; cp. *Iqtiṣād*, p. 217), that they failed to perceive this "since God did not create hearing and sight for them" (*ʾidhā lam yakhluq lahumu l-samʿa wal-ruʾyah*). Given the language and tone of the tract, this sounds very much as if he is speaking of an occasionalistic alteration of the usual course of events, but in view of al-Ghazālī's formal use of '*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' it need not, and should not, be so understood.[73]

When he comes to treat of the resurrection in *Qudsiyyah* (p. 89, 3ff. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 113, 14ff.), the discussion is simple and apparently straightforward. Nothing is said that might raise the question of the immateriality of the soul or its continued existence after the death of the body. He says simply that God has the power to restore something after causing it to cease to exist (*baʿda l-ʾifnāʾ*), without saying what it is that ceases to exist or, indeed, saying whether the soul or the pneuma do or do not in fact cease to exist. Following this he takes up the dogma of the interrogation of the deceased by the angels Munkar and Nakīr, and presents essentially the same argument for its possibility that he had in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 217). This is possible, he says, "since the only thing that is required is that life be restored to one

of the parts (*juz'un mina l-'ajzā'*) in which there is understanding of spoken discourse."[74] In traditional Ashʿarite doctrine, life is an accident whose presence in the subject is the condition of perception. Al-Ghazālī does not say here, however, exactly what he means by the restoration of life to one of the original particles. When, then, he raises the question of the punishment of the grave for someone the parts of whose body have been dispersed in the bellies of predators and the craws of scavenging birds, he says (p. 93, 5f. = *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 114, 4f.), "That of animals which perceives pain are special particles to which God has the power to restore perception" (*'ajzā'un makhṣūṣatun yaqdiru llāhu ʿalā l-'iʿādati l-'idrāki 'ilayhā*). It may be that by specifying "of animals" rather than "of men" (*mina l-'insān*) al-Ghazālī's aim is one of avoiding the question of the intellectual soul as distinguishable from its lower faculties that may be associated with the pneuma or animal spirit. Again, note that the argument of *Qudsiyyah* does not formally assert that it is the pneuma of the individual which, as such, undergoes the punishment of the grave, but only that God has the power to restore perception to some "part" (or parts) of the individual after it has become altogether separated from the body. The sole aim of the argument was to assert that it lies in God's power to cause the deceased to undergo a kind of (corporal) punishment.[75] In the school tradition, the pneuma is a recognized component of the living human organism as such, whence to focus the argument on it raises no questions. More importantly, however, one notes with regard to the context in which *Qudsiyyah* is to be read and interpreted that later in *Iḥyā'* (4, p. 487; cited on p. 56 above) al-Ghazālī will refer to the intellect (i.e., the rational soul) as a "part" or "particle" which is immortal; already in Book I (p. 54, 24; cited above, chap. 3, n. 56) he describes it as something divine or holy (*'ilāhī*) that is more noble than visible bodies. So again, as earlier in *Iqtiṣād*, al-Ghazālī has seemingly upheld the traditional thesis without formally and unambiguously committing himself to its usual interpretation.

Summary

Al-Ghazālī composed *Iqtiṣād* as a theological handbook, and this within the tradition of the Ashʿarite school. This was the theological tradition in which he as well as the majority of the scholars who made up the better part of his prospective and intended audience had been formed. In addition, however, the work was conceived and written within the broader, implicit context of his higher theology with its cosmological determinism of secondary causes, proximate and remote. Accordingly, *Iqtiṣād* is to be viewed as an attempt to bring the traditional school theology somehow into harmony with his own thinking—to recast it in such a way that it could be given a legitimate place within the wider context of his own theology. It sets forth, explains, and justifies the basic doctrines of Islam (*al-ʿaqā'id*) in a manner he deems to be appropriate for the schools, that is, in a form similar to that in which the religious scholars and theologians were trained and which is therefore accessible to them and adequate to their needs and intellectual abilities. It is thus "the proper mean" (*al-iqtiṣād*) between the level on which doctrine should be presented to ordinary people who are not scholars and that which is accessible only to those who have reached the threshold of the highest religious understanding and insight. The higher-level theoretical understanding of what is discussed is taken into account and, in a sense, governs the theology of *Iqtiṣād*. Not only does al-Ghazālī say nothing which, most formally and strictly interpreted, would be inconsistent with this more advanced theology (though hairs here and there must be split with a microtome), but the presence of elements of the latter is hinted at more or less directly in several places, as we have seen. Viewed on a superficial level, the traditional theses are retained and set out against the usual collection of countertheses, while the language is, so to speak, updated by an admixture of Aristotelian and, in some cases, expressly Avicennan terms and concepts, a procedure justified on one level because of the growing interest in the teaching of the falāsifa, whose influence is evident already in al-Juwaynī's *R. al-Niẓāmiyyah*. As we have seen, however, the matter is much more complex than this. Traditional arguments are retained where convenient (where there is no serious difference between the traditional

argument as commonly understood and al-Ghazālī's understanding of the argument and its implications concerning the thesis) and are modified or nuanced or fudged where suitable or necessary.

In its basic conception and structure, the proof given in *Iqtiṣād* for the contingency of the world and the existence of God is the traditional one based on bodies and accidents, even though al-Ghazālī considers it formally imperfect and inadequate. It is adequate, however, and suitable within the intellectual context of the school tradition, where its ontological presuppositions are well known. Al-Ghazālī expressly points the reader toward the Avicennan ontology, which he considers the proper conceptual foundation for a truly demonstrative proof, by inserting it at the end of the general statement of the argument (pp. 25f.), before he sets out to prove the several premises. Thus, at the end of the paragraph he says (p. 26, 1), "*wa-naḥnu lā nurīdu bil-sababi ʾillā l-murajjiḥ.*" Here, the language is purely that of Avicenna, and al-Ghazālī's own preference for it is evident from the emphasis marked by '*naḥnu*' as the formal subject of the sentence.[76] He will, of course, have to go beyond this argument for the contingency of the world in order to argue that the world has existed for only a finite period of time.

Similarly, al-Ghazālī retains the traditional argument for the divine origin and authority of the revelation on the basis of miracles, even though he considers it to be imperfect, for miracles constitute the only evidence that is formally appropriate to a tract of this kind and intellectually accessible to its presumed audience. In the proof for the possibility of the resurrection, he offers, as we have seen, an apology for the implied presuppositions of his earlier argument in *Tahāfut*, but stops short of making clear his own thought on the subject, although his mention of "the soul, the spirit, and life" not only indicates that there is something more to be considered but constitutes a clear cross-reference to the discussion of *Miḥakk* (pp. 136f.), where his views are more or less clearly indicated. The question of secondary causes and the universality of God's action intimately involves that of the cosmological role of celestial agents and their determination of the activity of sublunary causes and discussion of these matters he had expressly excluded at the outset when he stated (p. 4) that he would here consider the world only as it is created by God (only as "God's making": *ṣanʿu llāh*), with the result that in a number of places the discussion seems full of earnest inconclusiveness. Concerning the ground of ethical judgments and the thesis that God is not subject to ethical obligation, he offers definitions that as stated can be superficially harmonized with traditional definitions, but whose basic conception, since he holds that both God's acts and His commands can be fully rationalized, is not compatible with traditional teaching. The overall incompatibility of al-Ghazālī's intention with the traditional theology only becomes manifest, however, when set within the broader context of his higher theology, and the reader to whom *Iqtiṣād* is ostensibly addressed is not presumed to possess this broader context, wherefore it is kept just beyond the explicit horizon of the text.

As we have noted, religious scholars who were thoroughly acquainted with the traditions of the schools could hardly have failed to perceive that *Iqtiṣād* is by no means an ordinary manual of traditional Ashʿarite theology and that in a number of important respects al-Ghazālī modifies or sets aside the traditional teaching of the school either directly or indirectly. The direction of his thought had to be altogether obvious to anyone who had read *Miʿyār* and *Miḥakk,* to which the reader is referred at the outset (p. 15). In reply to questions regarding the orthodoxy of his thought, he attaches as an appendix to *Iqtiṣād* a chapter (pp. 246ff.) concerning the juridical conditions under which accusations of unbelief (*kufr*) may validly be made. Here, he insists that assertions which do not in fact formally reject the teaching of the Koran or of the Prophet cannot serve as the basis for such an accusation, however they may be viewed by people who do not fully understand them. Belief is assent to what is authentically taught in the Koran and in the prophetic Traditions, and unbelief is the intentional rejection of it as false. One has, however, here to distinguish the fundamental articles of faith (the *ʾuṣūl al-dīn*) from secondary teachings (the *furūʿ*). The former are given plainly and unambiguously in the Koran and the Traditions; to assent to them is Belief, and to assert the contrary of any of them is unbelief. It is for this reason that al-Ghazālī is so sensitive to criticism regarding what he had previously said concerning the resurrection. The latter, by contrast, are subject to dispute so that falsity of interpretation does not entail unbelief, since there can be incomplete or erroneous notions, learned or unlearned, of the ultimate sense of what is taught

that remain nonetheless compatible with the *ʾuṣūl* and so represent assent to them (pp. 246f.). The elaborate and inconclusive discussion of the human power of voluntary action and the patently tendentious treatment of the question of *tawallud* are due to the fact that these are passionately contested topics in the Ashʿarite opposition to the Muʿtazila. *Iqtiṣād* is composed as an Ashʿarite manual, and the refutation of these theses is formally required. Al-Ghazālī does not seek unnecessary conflict with the school, but rather, if possible, to lead them in the direction of his own point of view. That the Ḥanbalites would accuse him of unbelief was a foregone conclusion; they would have done so even if he had written an altogether traditional handbook, such as al-Juwaynī's *Irshād* or al-Mutawallī's *Mughnī*. Their opposition can only have been of minor concern to him. The appendix concerning *takfīr* addresses doubtless not only opposition to elements of *Tahāfut* other than the argument concerning the resurrection, but likely looks also to criticism, present or anticipated by members of his own school whose agreement he plainly hoped to gain, to things in *Miḥakk* and *Miʿyār* as well as to things he intended to say in *Iḥyāʾ*.

With *Qudsiyyah* we have a second summary of apparently Ashʿarite theology, though on a simpler and much more elementary scale than *Iqtiṣād*. Here, however, in conspicuous contrast to *Iqtiṣād*, al-Ghazālī adheres closely to the traditional language and argumentation of the school. Because the work is restricted to a very elementary level and by virtue of the care with which all assertions are formulated, he is able to carry this off without making any statements that are formally inconsistent with his higher theology. What we have in *Qudsiyyah* is, in effect, an elementary chatechism of manifestly Ashʿarite form. The subsequent placement of *Qudsiyyah* as a doctrinal summary in the second book of *Iḥyāʾ*, then, can be seen from two angles which give complementary views of its significance within the context. *Qudsiyyah* is, as al-Ghazālī states in the immediately preceding context (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 97f.), basically a catechetical manual, suitable for young people to protect them from the influence of heretical disputations. Accordingly, it stands as an element of Book II, at the beginning of *Iḥyāʾ*, in order to set forth the basic level of religious assent required to form the ground starting from which the reader is to undertake the cultivation of the religious duties and ascetical practices (*muʿāmalāt*), the significance and value of which will be presented in the following portions of the work. Already in Book I (p. 33, 30), well before the introduction of *Qudsiyya*, there is a reference to Book XXXV (*K. al-Tawḥīd wal-tawakkul*) where many elements of the higher theology will be presented. By devotedly carrying out all the practices and exercises set forth here, the reader will eventually come to be ready to receive the highest religious knowledge and insight (*maʿrifah, baṣīrah*), and can in fact do so without ever having to take up the formal study of kalām. Concomitantly, *Qudsiyyah* serves here to demonstrate to the reader that the foundation on which the elaborate exposition which follows is constructed is one of traditional orthodoxy and that the various elements of his higher theology that will appear in the subsequent books are intrinsically consistent and are also genuinely orthodox.[77] The downplay of both *Iqtiṣād* and *Qudsiyya* as lower-level handbooks for individuals whose religious and intellectual development reaches but little beyond that of simple, uneducated people already points in the same direction. And so too, the preceding polemic in Books I and II concerning the generally low intellectual level of the traditional school theology and the average mutakallim's lack of serious religious insight not only reflects al-Ghazālī's opinion of the school theologians, but also serves as a preparatory apologetic for the departures from their common teaching that will follow later in the course of the book.[78]

4. Open Conflict with the Ash'arite School

Fayṣal al-tafriqah *and* al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl

Iḥyā' was followed by *Maqṣad* and *Mishkāh,* in both of which the formal teaching of traditional Ash'arite kalām is rejected outright and the central elements, psychological, metaphysical, and cosmological, of al-Ghazālī's higher theology presented plainly and without circumlocution. The traditional form and content of *Qudsiyya* and its placement at the beginning of *Iḥyā'* could hardly have been expected to assure all of al-Ghazālī's readers of his orthodoxy and there ensued a strong reaction on the part of some against his theological teaching because of its departure from the traditional theology of the schools. This is made clear in the opening of *Fayṣal* (pp. 5f.), where al-Ghazālī speaks of "a party of those who are envious of one of our books which treats of the essential truths concerning religious duties and practices (*'asrāru mu'āmalāti l-dīn*) and who believe that there are things in it which are contrary to the teaching of the earlier fellows of the school and the professors of theology

(*al-'aṣḥāb al-mutaqaddimīn wa-mashā'ikhi l-mutakallimīn*) and that to deviate from the teaching of al-Ash'arī even by so much as a span is unbelief."[1]

Al-Ghazālī was very much stung by this condemnation, for there follows (pp. 7ff.) a vehement polemic in which, through the introduction of a series of verses from the Koran, he depicts his own situation as he suffers the attacks of his opponents as equivalent to that of the Prophet who had to face the opposition of the pagan unbelievers of Mecca. Their opposition is oppressive, but if God so willed He would give all of them right guidance (Q6,35). They will accept no evidence of the truth of the message (Q15,15, and 6,7) and even were angels to be sent down to them and the dead to speak to them, they will still not believe unless God wills; most of them are ignorant of the truth (Q6,111). Indicating the formal topic of the book, al-Ghazālī goes on to say that the knowledge of the true nature of unbelief (*kufr*) and belief (*'īmān*) and of error and truth are not revealed to minds that are polluted by the quest for status and wealth, but only to those that are purified by rigorous ascetic and intellectual discipline so as to become like polished mirrors (cp. *Iḥyā'* 3, p. 12; cited on p. 26 above) and to shine like the lamp mentioned in *sūrat al-Nūr* (Q24,35).[2] "How, he asks, can the fundamental truths concerning the immaterial realm (*'asrār al-malakūt*) be revealed to people who are inspired by their lower appetites, whose idol (*ma'būduhum*) is their sultans, whose orientation for prayer is in the direction of their dirhams and their dinars, whose sacred law is their own intellectual triviality, whose desire is their status . . ." (pp. 9f.). The preface concludes (p. 10) with a citation of God's address to the Prophet in Q53.29f.: "Keep your distance from those who turn away from our reminder (*dhikrunā*) and desire only the goods of this world; this is as far as their knowledge reaches; your Lord knows well who wanders astray from the path and He knows well those who follow the way of truth."[3]

What al-Ghazālī sets himself to do, then, is to return to the question of the formal criteria for determining the status of individuals as believers or unbelievers—members of the Muslim community or aliens—and this specifically with regard to the nonliteral interpretation (*ta'wīl*) of descriptions of God presented in the Koran and in canonically authentic Traditions. This is of particular importance,

since al-Ghazālī will confirm and legitimate his higher theology not merely as a valid interpretation of the Koran and Tradition, but as the intellectually most thorough and exact conceptual exposition of their deeper meaning.[4] Although he holds the discussion to a very general plane—for he has no intention of explicitly taking up and arguing the particular questions that provoked the controversy—the *ta'wīl* with which he is chiefly concerned would appear to be that involving his conception of the operation of the cosmic system in the determinate causation of events, including the voluntary actions of human agents, in the sublunary world. This would seem to be indicated plainly enough at the outset by his remark to the effect that scholars and theologians whose minds are concentrated primarily on worldly status and wealth cannot know the hidden truths concerning the immaterial realm and to be confirmed where, in the discussion (pp. 37ff.) of interpretation and exegesis on the basis of the five modes or levels of the presence of existence (*darajāt al-wujūd*),[5] he cites as examples of the "intellectual level" (*al-wujūd al-ʿaqlī*) the interpretation of statements that mention God's "hand" as referring to "a spiritual and intellectual hand," which is to say, to the intermediate agency of angels (p. 40, 10ff.), just as the Tradition according to which "the first thing God created was the intellect" is to be interpreted as referring to "an angel which is called an intellect insofar as it has intellectual cognition of things through its own being and essence without any need to learn" (pp. 40f.).[6]

Subsequently (pp. 46ff.), al-Ghazālī insists that it is obvious, in some cases even to the Ḥanbalites, that nonliteral interpretation is absolutely necessary whenever the literal sense of the text makes no rational sense and insists (pp. 49f.) that the validity of the logical rules which he had presented in *Qisṭās* cannot conceivably be denied by anyone who understands them (cp. *Iqtiṣad*, pp. 17f.).[7] Moreover, since a valid charge of unbelief has to be based on a denial of one of the fundamental tenets of Islam to which every believer is obliged to assent (*al-'uṣūl*), no one can be so accused on the basis of assertions concerning secondary matters (*furūʿ*); disagreement is allowed, that is to say, concerning matters which are not elements of the primary articles of faith (p. 56). Though he does not explicitly draw the conclusion, al-Ghazālī plainly means to imply that since he asserts that

God wills and "creates" every contingent entity and every event that occurs in the celestial and the sublunary worlds, his views concerning the operation of secondary causes, celestial and sublunary, cannot constitute the basis of a juridically valid charge of unbelief, even on the principles of scholars who are ignorant of the true conformity of his theology with the revelation. Before going into further detail concerning the bases of valid charges of unbelief, he introduces a generalized polemic against the school theologians and their pretentiousness (pp. 67–72), repeating much of what he had said in the first and second books of *Iḥyā'*. Here, however, he attacks the thesis that some minimal level of speculative reflection (*naẓar*) is required in order to ground a sound and stable assent to the truth of the revelation. The reasoning of the Ashʿarite masters who hold this thesis is turned against them when al-Ghazālī says (p. 71) that religious belief founded in the reasoning and demonstrations of the mutakallimūn is weak and readily subject to lapse when confronted by any counterargument (*shubhah*). This is precisely the language employed by the Ashʿarites to argue the necessity of at least some minimal level of rational speculation as the foundation of sound religious assent and therefore that speculative inquiry is a universal obligation.[8]

The question of accusations of unbelief is raised also in a discussion of the doctrine of the falāsifa concerning the divine attributes in *Munqidh* (pp. 107ff.), where, although *Fayṣal* is cited, nothing is said that would precisely identify the particular grounds for such accusations as he has in mind. In the ensuing discussion of the metaphysics of the falāsifa (pp. 112ff.), he goes on to inveigh against those who think that anything which is found in their works is to be rejected out of hand, and remarks that "a party of those whose minds are not solidly grounded in the sciences (*lam tastaḥkim fī l-ʿulūm*) and whose intellectual vision has not been opened to the ultimate limits of the doctrines of the various schools (*'aqṣā ghāyāti l-madhāhib*) have challenged certain statements on the deeper truths of the religious sciences (*'asrāru ʿulūmi l-dīn*) and they allege that these statements derive from the ancients."[9] He goes on to say that some of these things are products of [his own] intuition (*muwalladāt al-khawāṭir*), while others are found in Muslim religious books (*al-kutub al-sharʿiyyah*), and most are to be found in the works of the sufis. The "deeper truths of the religious sciences" would seem to point to *Iḥyā'* which was also

alluded to in *Fayṣal,* but the plural "our works" (*taṣānīfunā*) would indicate that several works are involved, among them certainly *Maqṣad,* it would seem.

Iljām al-'awāmm 'an 'ilm al-kalām

Al-Ghazālī's break with the school tradition—his isolation from scholars in the tradition in which he had been formed—seems to have preoccupied him, for *Iljām,* written at the very end of his life, appears to be another response, albeit from a somewhat different angle, to the challenge he had confronted in *Fayṣal.* The work is presented (pp. 51f.) as a reply to a request for guidance concerning "Traditions that give the rabble and the ignorant amongst errant religious simpletons (*al-ra'ā'u wal-juhhālu mina l-ḥashwiyyati l-ḍullāl*) the impression that the pious ancestors understood descriptions of God which speak, for example, of His shape, His hand, His foot, His descending, moving, sitting on the throne, etc., literally." In response, then, al-Ghazālī proposes (p. 52) to do three things, (1) set forth what was in fact the teaching of the pious ancestors (*al-salaf*) with regard to what should be the conduct of simple believers with regard to such Traditions, (2) to demonstrate the true correctness of their teaching on this matter, and (3) to explain several other worthwhile matters that are pertinent to the topic. It will be sufficient for our present needs to look only at a few of the major themes, theses, and arguments, without going into the polemical and often redundant detail of al-Ghazālī's exposition.

Under the first heading, al-Ghazālī says (pp. 53ff.) that the first generations of Muslims held that in these matters simple believers (*al-'awāmm*) are to cultivate seven habits and attitudes. The first is that they are to avoid literalism altogether, since all bodies that consist of different members are created entities and to worship a created being is to reject the consensus of the first generations in favor of idolatry (p. 55; see also pp. 77, 100ff. *et alibi*). They are to recognize that apparently anthropomorphic descriptions of God do have a meaning that is compatible with the expressions employed and that also befits God's glory and majesty, even if one may not know what it

is (p. 58). The second is that they must understand that these descriptions "are meant to address the understanding of a unique audience, namely, the saints and those who have profound religious knowledge and do in fact understand (*tafhīmu man huwa 'ahluhu wa-humu l-'awliyā'u wal-rāsikhūna fī l-'ilm*)" (p. 60).[10] The third is that they acknowledge that for their part they don't know the real meaning of these descriptions (pp. 61ff.). The fourth is that the simple believer is to refrain from raising any questions about these Traditions, either to himself alone or to another (pp. 63f.). The fifth is that he is to let stand the wording of the text without attempting any exegetical paraphrase (*tafsīr*) or interpretation (*ta'wīl*) of the problematic expressions (pp. 64ff.). The sixth is that he is not to attempt to think these problems through for himself and is to shun the formal reasoning of the mutakallimūn and the cultivation of scholastic disputation as well (pp. 77ff.). The seventh is to "leave the matter in the hands of those who really know" (*al-taslīmu li-'ahli l-ma'rifah*), recognizing that "the sense of these expressions and their deeper meaning (*ma'ānī hādhihi l-ẓawāhiri wa-'asrāruhā*) were not hidden from the Prophet and abū Bakr, or from the leading Companions, nor from the saints and those scholars who have profound religious knowledge (*al-rāsikhūna fī l-'ilm*)" (p. 84, 1ff.).

Under the second heading (pp. 87ff.), al-Ghazālī explains that the ultimate good of human action, since it involves the next life, cannot be known either by experience or by reasoning, but only "by prophetic enlightenment (*bi-nūri l-nubuwwah*)."[11] The Prophet and the Companions, moreover, though rejecting anthropomorphic conceptions of God, did not recommend "inquiry, investigation, exegesis and interpretation" (*al-baḥthu wal-taftīshu wal-tafsīru wal-ta'wīl*), but rather the seven habits set out above (pp. 88f.). For this reason, simple believers are obliged to shun *ta'wīl,* and the scholars are forbidden to share it with them; for either of them to do so is a blameworthy innovation (*bid'atun madhmūmah:* pp. 90 and 93), and so also are the various forms of scholastic disputation (*mujādalah*), since they too violate the authoritative teaching of the first generations (p. 95).[12]

In the third of the major sections of the book al-Ghazālī returns initially to the question of the metaphorical descriptions of God that are found in the Koran and the Tradition. Here (pp. 97ff.), his thesis is that in speaking of God, the Prophet used metaphorical language

but sparingly[13] and that when these metaphorical expressions are viewed each in its full context, both verbal and historical, it is manifest to any reasonable person that they are not to be taken literally. The Prophet employed metaphors to say certain things because the Arabic lexicon has no words by means of which the meanings intended can be represented directly (pp. 100f.). Moreover, he employed anthropomorphic metaphors, since to attempt to inform ordinary people concerning the transcendent unity of God's being would have caused misunderstandings which were even more difficult to counter (pp. 103f.). It is impossible that God have intended to mislead or to deceive; the problem is simply that some people are created obtuse (pp. 103ff.).

In the second section (pp. 105ff.) al-Ghazālī returns to the theme that those who lack the privilege of higher knowledge must refrain from raising questions concerning the meaning of problematic traditions, but this time in order to take up the tradition according to which the Koran is "eternal and uncreated." Here, for the sake of his presumptive reader, "an insightful individual who asks the question for the purpose of gaining understanding of the true realities" (*dhakiyyun mustafhimun li-fahami l-ḥaqā'iq*), he treats the matter formally and at some length (pp. 107ff.). What he does is to distinguish four degrees of being and the presence of being (being in the entity itself, being in the mind, being in speech, and being on the written page) in order to give an ontological explanation and justification of the traditional Ash'arite distinction between the recitation (*al-qirā'ah, al-tilāwah*) and what is recited (*al-maqrū', al-matlūw*).[14] Once again, he insists (pp. 110f.) that the pious ancestors of the first generations knew all of this, but refrained from talking about it openly.

Finally, then, al-Ghazālī attacks the common Ash'arite thesis of the universal obligation to undertake some elementary theological inquiry in order to found religious assent to the basic doctrines, distinguishing six levels of assent. Of these, only the highest is based on properly justified knowledge; the belief of the school theologians is that of the second level, being based on impressionistic proofs (*'adillatun wahmiyyah*) that are accepted on the basis of publicly recognized authority.

The attention of *Iljām* is, as stated in the introduction, directly focused not so much on kalām as such as on a number of problem-

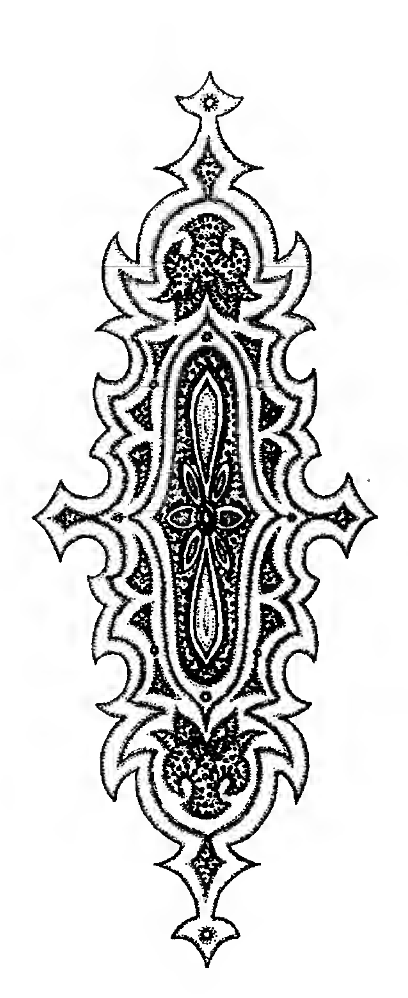
atic traditions together with several Koran verses[15] and the role of the school theologians in the conflicts regarding their interpretation within the community of sunni scholars. It is from this perspective that al-Ghazālī aims his attacks on kalām and the mutakallimūn, for the most part tangentially in the first major section of the book and more explicitly in the last two. *Iljām,* with its many redundancies and often repetitious polemic, thus resumes the underlying problem of *Fayṣal,* even though their specific topics are, strictly speaking, formally different.[16] Given al-Ghazālī's reiterated condemnation of *tashbīh,* sc., of the literal interpretation of the traditions and verses in question, and his explicit interpretation of "ascended the throne" and his explanation of the meaning of "is eternal and uncreated" as said of the Koran, one could take it that the work is directed, at least in part, against the Karrāmiyya and the Ḥanbalites. It is plain, however, that they lie only marginally within his line of fire.[17] Al-Ghazālī's principal aim is to distinguish those to whom it is given to have knowledge of the divine things (*ma'rifatu l-'umūri l-'ilāhiyyah*) (p. 63) so as to understand the metaphorical descriptions of God, sc., those who share his higher theology, from those to whom it is not. Of the former, he would seem to identify two groups when he speaks of "the saints and those who have profound [rational] knowledge" (p. 60), that is, ascetics and sufis on the one hand and on the other himself and such scholars as may share his views. Although he does say (p. 64) that the interpretation of these things should not be preached from the pulpit and, in classifying the various sources and foundations of religious assent at the end of the book, deals with the status of the common people, it is clear that in speaking of those who are incapable of understanding them, his focus is chiefly on the religious scholars. Lest there be any doubt regarding who is counted among the simple people (*al-'awāmm*), al-Ghazālī lists them: they are "the men of letters (*al-'adīb*), the grammarians, the traditionists, the exegetes (*al-mufassir*), the jurists (*al-faqīh*) and the mutakallimūn,"[18] while those who are capable of understanding are described as "those whose sole occupation is to learn to swim in the seas of religious gnosis (*al-ma'rifah*) and who have restricted their lives to this alone and have turned their faces from this world and their appetites and turned their backs on wealth and status and mankind and all pleasures and are devoted wholly to God . . ." (p. 67, 11ff., with which

cp. p. 63, 11ff.; the image of the sea is repeated, p. 84, 13).[19] It is worth noting that when al-Ghazālī says that the failure of some to see the truth is an element of "[God's] custom (*sunnah*) which is inalterable" (p. 105, 4), he alludes in effect to Q 35,43 (*lan tajida li-sunnati llāhi tabdīlan*), which he had cited earlier in his exposition of the deterministic governance of the world through the angel of the outermost sphere (pp. 68f.).

Al-Ghazālī's main point in all this is that the religious scholars have to acknowledge to themselves that they do not and cannot know and understand the true (allegorical) meaning of these metaphors and that they must therefore refrain altogether from questioning the truth of the interpretation of them by those to whom such knowledge is given. Here, as elsewhere, he associates with "those who have higher religious knowledge" and "those who are deeply rooted in science" (*al-rāsikhūna fī l-ʿilm*) also the sufis (here, *al-ʾawliyāʾ*), but his *taʾwīl* of "ascends the throne" (pp. 68f.) and his explanation of the degrees of being (pp. 107ff.) make it clear that it is not the claims of mystical experience that are in question, but rather his own theoretical cosmology and ontology. The sciences of exegesis (*tafsīr*) and law (*fiqh*) are not, properly and as such, concerned with metaphysics (*al-ʾumūr al-ʾilāhiyyah*) and *taʾwīl*, and therefore it is with the mutakallimūn as such that al-Ghazālī has difficulties. Accordingly, he insists that the reasoning and the arguments of the school theology are not truly rigorous and scientific, but on the contrary are based on superficial sense impressions[20] in such a way as to "confuse the minds of simple people" (*tushawwishu qulūba l-ʿawāmm*) (p. 79, 3f.), amongst whom he includes the traditionists, the exegetes, and the jurists. The understanding of the truth of al-Ghazālī's allegorical interpretations, is, therefore, beyond the capacities of the religious scholars and he is not obliged to attempt to demonstrate its validity to them.[21] Since they do not and, in fact, cannot understand his higher theology, he would have, in order to argue with them, to descend to their level and to indulge in scholastic disputation. Such matters, indeed, are formally excluded from the competence of the mutakallimūn, since their science extends only to the basic dogmas (cp. *Jawāhir*, p. 21). Accordingly, al-Ghazālī cites the authority of Mālik b. Anas against interpreting God's ascent of the Throne

(pp. 60f. and 105) and that of ʿUmar (pp. 63f.) against discussing God's *qadar*.[22]

Al-Ghazālī's claim that the meaning of the words used in these traditions together with their inner meaning (*ʾasrāruhā*)—which is to say, his theological interpretation of them—was not hidden from the Prophet and abū Bakr and the principal Companions and from the saints and the learned who have truly profound knowledge (*wa-ʿani l-ʾawliyāʾi wal-ʿulamāʾi l-rāsikhīn*) (p. 84, 1ff.) is somewhat tendentious, to say the very least, but his reiterated claim, the proof of which occupies the second major section of the work, that having such knowledge the Companions and the pious ancestors taught that "simple people" (*al-ʿawāmm*) were to recognize that knowledge of such things is given to "those who know" (*ʾahl al-maʿrifah*) without themselves either inquiring into their interpretation or doubting the truth of it is of considerable importance. Evidently he did not feel that the thesis set forth in *Fayṣal* to the effect that according to the revealed law it is forbidden to charge a Muslim with unbelief because of his interpretation of the metaphorical descriptions of God that are found in the Koran and the hadīth was a sufficient response to his critics, so he carries the juridical attack one step further in *Iljām*. The prophet, the Companions, and the authorities of the first generations legislated the seven rules set out in the first part of the book: it is forbidden by law that religious scholars who are not endowed with superior theological insight make any attempt to interpret such things for themselves or under any circumstances question the interpretation of them by those who possess superior insight. For al-Ghazālī to attempt to explain and justify his interpretation to his opponents would itself be a violation of law.[23]



5. Conclusions

The Rhetoric of Harmonization

Several things would seem clear enough. One, that there is a basic, integrated theoretical system that underlies al-Ghazālī's logical and theological writings, orders them, and gives them consistency. In different works, various elements of the broader system surface in different ways, here more, there less explicitly. In most of his writings, primary elements are brought into clear conceptual focus in at least a few places and in some works more or less regularly throughout. In many places, however, one or another of them may be deliberately suppressed or obscured or held scarcely discernible just beneath the articulated surface of the text. This occurs sometimes—most conspicuously in *Iḥyāʾ*—even when the particular thesis may be quite clearly presented elsewhere in the same work. The form, cast, and scope of the particular work or passage determine in almost all cases the language, formal or figurative, technical or religious, in which any given theological thesis is presented, the mode and level,

in short, in which al-Ghazālī states or alludes to or hints at his understanding of it or may simply dodge the issue altogether. Where he presents his thought in unambiguous conceptual terms, the basic character and structure of the system is clear to see and once grasped is readily discerned as governing what is said and, occasionally, what is not said when, though operatively present, it is not so presented. One has to do here not with the esoteric doctrine of any given school, but with a diversity of presentations of al-Ghazālī's own thought and of apology against those religious scholars who came to oppose or to condemn it. Although al-Ghazālī came more and more to view the schoolmen who became his opponents and detractors as belonging to a religious and intellectual lower class who were incapable of grasping the truth of his higher theology, one should not try to separate his works (or parts of his works) into esoteric and exoteric, as if some were addressed to the religious scholars at large and others, containing his "real position," to some elite fraternity. His works are, rather, to be viewed together as the essentially consistent, albeit rhetorically modulated, address to his fellow Shāfiʿites and to the *ʿulamāʾ* at large. Though some of his writings, certainly—*Qisṭās,* for example—might well be classed as "popular" works, it would be erroneous to suppose that *Maqṣad* and *Mishkāh* were aimed at an altogether different audience than were *Qudsiyyah* and *Iqtiṣād.* Where al-Ghazālī speaks less than forthrightly in expressing his views, his original and primary aim was not so much to withhold his teaching from the religious scholars as to lead the hesitant among them toward it. That one seek rhetorically to avoid needless antagonism and fruitless confrontation while cultivating an audience is a quite different matter from his trying simply to deceive them.[1]

It is clear as well that al-Ghazālī's basic theological system is fundamentally incompatible with the traditional teaching of the Ashʿarite school. His rejection of kalām as a simplistic discipline that is inadequate either to the achievement of genuine intellectual understanding or to the attainment of higher religious insight is obvious from the outset. Already in *Miḥakk* he makes his opinion of the school theology of the mutakallimūn clear. In their conceptualization of dogmatic theses most of the mutakallimūn do no more than accept the teaching of their masters uncritically (p. 56). Moreover, the premises and the arguments they employ are accepted on the same

basis of commonly accepted opinions (*mashhūrāt*), and because of this, al-Ghazālī finds, "their syllogisms yield inconsistent conclusions (*natā'iju mutanāqiḍah*) about which they are themselves at a loss and their minds are befuddled as they attempt to get them right" (pp. 66f.). Their writings are "stuffed" with lengthy discourse in language that lacks precision and clarity, while true enlightenment (*al-kashf*) is achieved only by the path that he, al-Ghazālī, has chosen to take. Exploiting the equivocities of the word '*al-kalām*', he therefore counsels the reader that he ought not to occupy himself with the usual discourse (the usual teaching of the schools: *al-kalām al-muʿtād*) but only with that which gives true benefit and insight (*al-kalāmu l-mufīdu l-mūḍiḥ*) (p. 77). The appendix on definitions (pp. 118ff.) emends, corrects, and, in substance, rejects a number of basic traditional conceptions. Such remarks are not altogether lacking even in *Iqtiṣād,* as he remarks (p. 31) that what the mutakallimūn have had to say regarding accidents is neither adequate nor clear and later advises the reader (p. 195) with regard to the origin of the moral obligation to know God that what is usually said on the topic (*al-kalām al-muʿtād*) can neither satisfy intellectual thirst nor eliminate ambiguity. Following *Miḥakk,* then, kalām is much more explicitly rejected in *Iḥyā',* as its many deficiencies and the intellectual shortcomings of the mutakallimūn are set out at length in the first two books and, in the classification of the religious sciences, it is initially set aside in Book II and subsequently ignored altogether in Book XXI where he begins to bring the structure and substance of his own theology more and more to the fore.

Al-Ghazālī's aim was to work out and to present a global theological vision that in its higher metaphysics and ethics embraces all the sciences, disciplines, and practices proper to or recognized by Islam—all levels of Muslim experience, knowledge, belief, and activity—within an integrated whole. To carry this off—and particularly if it were to gain broader acceptance among religious scholars—he had in some way to bring his own metaphysics and his essentially Avicennan conception of the nature of the rational soul and its place within the cosmic system into some kind of positive relationship with the traditional teaching of the Ashʿarite school. Since the two are fundamentally incompatible, one of the things he did was to attempt a kind of harmonization at the level of language. Often, as we have

seen, he succeeds in using (or misusing) characteristic Ashʿarite expressions and formulations without meaning to assert what they normally mean in their own, proper contexts, but rather to express very different intentions of his own. The most conspicuous examples of this are his formally restricted uses of 'create' ('*khalaqa, yakhluqu*' and '*ikhtaraʿa, yakhtariʿu*') and of 'the course of God's custom' (*jarayānu l-ʿādah*). Similarly, there is a whole set of Koran verses and Traditions that he commonly employs as statements or confirmations of his own teaching, as, for example, he cites the Tradition, "To your Lord in the time allotted to your lives belong diffusions of His mercy; will you not open yourselves to them?" (e.g., *Mīzān,* p. 19; *Maqṣad,* p. 83; *Munqidh,* p. 87), as implying the action of the agent intellect on the mind that is ready to receive its output. Nor ought we to imagine that al-Ghazālī's using the Tradition in this way necessarily represents a kind of sly and deliberate misappropriation of its "original meaning," for under the assumptions of al-Ghazālī's conception of the nature of the rational soul and its relation to the agency of the celestial intelligences within the cosmic system, this is what (or one aspect of what) this hadīth obviously must mean. Clear indications of al-Ghazālī's doctrine are abundant enough that only the dullest of his contemporaries would have mistaken his intention in using such language. His usage is rhetorical, his aim to give a familiar and traditional tone to what he says and so make it palatable to those who would reject it outright were it set in other, more formal terms. He commonly mixes vocabularies in order to avoid associating what he has to say with any one tradition or school.

Often al-Ghazālī will avoid presenting his position, either fudging the issue, sometimes in a fog of traditional language, or dodging it altogether as for one or another reason inappropriate to the immediate context or occasionally as not to be divulged. The several questions concerning which he sometimes or usually avoids expressing his views in unambivalent terms had not all the same importance within the school, and this is often reflected in how he treats them. Simple relationships of cause and effect in everyday events he ordinarily asserts as self-evident, without hesitation or circumlocution. When, however, the question of causal relationships is brought up in association with the Ashʿarites' denial of secondary causation, he feels obliged to finesse the issue. We saw this, for example, in *Miʿyār*

(p. 109), where he dodges the issue by giving a contextually ambivalent reply: he makes an appropriate distinction, but in language whose intention the reader is likely to misconstrue, and then drops the matter without having made his position clear.[2] Similarly, in the later books of *Iḥyāʾ* and in *Maqṣad*, where his understanding of the lawful necessity of a number of causal sequences is set forth at length, he sometimes recasts his assertions about efficient causes in terms of "conditions", as if to qualify them so as to show their conformity with Ashʿarite usage and teaching. "Condition", however, proves on examination to be but another term in his lexicon of harmonization, its meaning adapted and adjusted to the rhetoric of his address to the religious scholars.[3] So too, because the word '*tawlīd*' located one of the Muʿtazilite theses the denial of which was an identifying criterion of traditional Ashʿarite doctrine, al-Ghazālī will sometimes deny that one thing "produces" (*wallada*) another, even though elsewhere he employs the verb in precisely this sense while asserting his own teaching in his own voice (e.g., *Qisṭās*, pp. 21f. and 24). The question of the immediate efficient cause of human primary acts holds an analogous place in the disputes between the Ashʿarites and the Muʿtazila, so that when the nature and efficacy of "the created power of voluntary action" (*al-qudratu l-ḥādithah, qudratu l-ʿabd*) is raised explicitly, al-Ghazālī tends to weasel, as in the inconclusive discussion of *Miḥakk* (pp. 88f.). When he is formally obliged to deal with the question in *Iqtiṣād*, he buries the real issue under a cloud of dialectical obfuscation. So too, while he speaks plainly of the human agent's power of acting as the immediate cause of the occurrence of the voluntary act in various places in *Iḥyāʾ*, he occasionally retreats, in the very same sections, into the ambivalence of '*qudrah*' as naming both the faculty and its act and into talking about the power of voluntary action as a "condition" of the act's occurrence. Here, as in most other places, al-Ghazālī's intention is clear enough. His condescension to the Ashʿarite school is on the level of language, not of substance.

These questions, however important one's treatment of them may be as a criterion of orthodoxy within the Ashʿarite school, are, strictly speaking, secondary (*furūʿ*) in that they involve matters deviant opinions concerning which may be heresy (*bidʿah*) but not unbelief (*kufr*), at least according to most of al-Ghazālī's Shāfiʿite colleagues

and fellows. By contrast, the question of the resurrection and the next life, together with those of the punishment of the grave and the interrogation by the angels, Munkar and Nakīr, etc., involves basic Muslim doctrine the denial of which formally constitutes unbelief. How the truth of these dogmas is to be, or may be, consistently affirmed is intimately connected to how one conceives the nature of human life and for al-Ghazālī, therefore, is directly associated with the conception of the rational soul. We have seen how in several different works he avoids expressing his own views plainly and outright by listing a number of divergent opinions and either indicating his own obliquely or simply leaving the reader to infer what it may be from what he says or suggests in other contexts. His understanding of the essential nature of the human soul, however, is never really in doubt; it is more or less plainly suggested in *Miḥakk* and is set forth in detail in both *Iḥyāʾ* and *Mishkāh*. But this is not, in and of itself, properly a matter of basic dogma either, wherefore his occasional pretense of fudging his position is basically a rhetorical move. His views concerning the resurrection and the next life, however, remain problematic, for it could not be easily argued that this is a negotiable question and there was a level of conflict with the scholars which he hoped to avoid. It is notable that the only instance we have seen in which al-Ghazālī seems manifestly to deny what he in fact believes occurs in the discussion of the resurrection in *Iqtiṣād*.

Al-Ghazālī's Relation to the Ashʿarite School as Reflected in the Chronological Sequence of His Writings

It would be extremely difficult to discern any notable theoretical development or evolution in al-Ghazālī's theology—if any, indeed, there be—from *Maqāṣid* to *Iljām*. This is due in part to the great diversity of his works in form and focus alike, but most of all it is because of his language, which for all the polish and eloquence it so often has, and sometimes because of them, tends in many places to

be somewhat vague or noncommittal when fundamental theological propositions are in play. The diversity of terminology and style—the lexicon and rhetoric of presentation—allow the reader a fair sense of his meaning on one level but at the same time may mask it on another. His language, in short, lacks—or fails anyhow to convey—precision and distinctness regarding the finer (and sometimes crucial) detail of the propositions that are apparently asserted. He tends to offer rhetorically more than he is willing to serve up. Again, one and the same basic topic is, in some cases, so differently treated from one context to another that while the one passage may well confirm the general meaning of another it adds little or no additional information. That is to say, al-Ghazālī often states or hints at his understanding of a problem or issue in a given place only partially, so that in order to see his general sense of the particular question more clearly, one has to look to other texts which supply elements that were omitted or obscured in the first. Even then, however, where recourse to one passage may bring the sense and implication of what is said in another more clearly into view, the view often remains only that of the general sense of what he thinks, while important aspects of the matter remain unexplained. As the basic thesis becomes clear, additional questions arise, for many of which no answer is offered anywhere. One has thus the impression that the charges of the Andalusian scholar al-Ṭurṭūshī (d. 520/1126) and others that al-Ghazālī had dabbled in matters he had not fully mastered (cf. Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought,* pp. 98ff.) are not entirely without plausibility. As we remarked at the outset, carefully read and considered, his formal treatment of a number of topics is remarkably superficial; and this is as true of his presentation of logic in *Miʿyār* and *Miḥakk* as it is of the discussions of some metaphysical and theological questions in the later works. In short, one has the impression that so great was his conviction that he had achieved a definitive grasp of "the true natures of things" he may have followed the advice he gives his reader in *Iḥyaʾ* 4, p. 485 (translated above in ch. 3, p. 65) not to indulge in a great deal of speculation, but rather to pursue religious perfection.

Setting aside any question regarding the course of al-Ghazālī's theology from the time he wrote *Maqāṣid* until his death (i.e., from A.H. 486 to 505), a superficial examination of the sequence of his more

important theological works in terms of his rejection of Ashʿarite orthodoxy and his alienation from the school may prove interesting, at least for the purposes of the present study.[4]

Formally, *Maqāṣid* is a completely neutral work. Al-Ghazālī presents it (1, p. 2) as a preface to *Tahāfut:* a general outline of the teachings of the falāsifa, some of whose errors he will subsequently refute in the latter work. In the general presentation of their teaching, however, al-Ghazālī gives no indication as to what doctrines he may agree with and which not. In *Tahāfut,* then, he twice (pp. 130f. and 179ff.) goes to some length to insist that he intends here to assert or defend the truth of no proposition, but only to refute the claims of the falāsifa to have demonstrated the truth of a number of their theses, three of which entail unbelief and the rest, heresy. One might infer that the doctrine presented in *Maqāṣid,* purged of the twenty theses refuted in *Tahāfut,* represents generally the valid teaching of those whom al-Ghazālī will subsequently refer to (*Mīzān,* p. 12, 8) as "the falāsifa who believe generally in God and the last day." No indication is given in *Tahāfut,* however, of precisely what other elements of their teaching beyond the twenty theses al-Ghazālī may also reject or may accept.[5] *Miʿyār,* then, is presented almost as a kind of appendix to *Tahāfut.* Though it contains a general introduction "to the methods of reflection and speculative thinking . . . and syllogistic forms and terminology (*al-ʿibar*)," al-Ghazālī says at the beginning that his primary purpose in writing is to aid the reader's understanding of *Tahāfut* by introducing him formally to the logic and the technical lexicon (*iṣṭilāḥāt*) of the falāsifa. Accordingly, the long section on definitions (pp. 150ff.) formally presents the definitions of the falāsifa, which in a number of places are explicitly contrasted with those of the mutakallimūn. There is, thus, a certain ambivalence—or potential of ambivalence—in various places in *Miʿyār,* as one cannot be everywhere certain whether or not al-Ghazālī is speaking in his own voice or whether, when he cites the falāsifa explicitly or the mutakallimūn, he agrees or disagrees with what he says they say. When, for example, he says (p. 195, 4f.) that the being which is necessary in itself (*al-wājibu l-wujūdi bi-dhātihī*) has to be necessary in its every aspect (*min kulli jihātihī*), is he reporting the doctrine of the falāsifa or speaking in his own voice?[6] He ends the book, however, by saying (p. 195) that

it was not written in order to explain things in detail, but in order to show "the way to come to the knowledge of the essential natures of things and to explain the rules of systematic reasoning" (*li-bayāni ṭarīqi taʿarrufi ḥaqāʾiqi l-ʾumūri wa-tamhīdi qānūni l-naẓar*). What, thus, at the outset was stated to be the primary purpose of the book is ignored, as he seems to imply that most of what he has presented he agrees with. This impression is reinforced as he concludes by saying that since happiness in this life and the next is not to be attained save by knowledge *and* action, he intends to compose a book on the balance for weighing actions (*mīzān al-ʿamal*), just as he has here on the measure for knowledge (*miʿyār al-ʿilm*).

With *Miḥakk*, written almost simultaneously with *Miʿyār* and on materially the same subject, we encounter a significant shift in al-Ghazālī's manner of address, for where in the latter work he had presented the logical teaching of the falāsifa as such and in their terminology, throughout *Miḥakk* he speaks plainly in his own voice. In order that the reader may better understand (i.e., accept) the universal validity of what he has to say, he has chosen to avoid the formal terminology of either the fuqahāʾ or the mutakallimūn or the falāsifa and to make up (*ikhtaraʿa*) a neutral vocabulary of his own (p. 48, 13ff.).[7] And it is here that we encounter the first overt statements on the intellectual inadequacy and inferiority of the traditional school theology, along with the presentation, even if somewhat oblique, of al-Ghazālī's own views on, for example, the nature of the rational soul (pp. 136ff.; cited on pp. 60f. above) and God's governance of the universe through the agency of "a single celestial cause" by means of a complex sequence of intermediary causes (p. 82, 12ff., cited in chap. 3, n. 59 above). It is also in *Miḥakk* that we first find al-Ghazālī saying that those who really know the truth about religious matters are not permitted to talk openly about it (p. 137, cited on p. 61 above). Numerous examples taken from questions of law indicate the audience to whom the book is primarily addressed, viz., his colleagues, the religious scholars. *Miḥakk* can thus be seen as marking an important moment in al-Ghazālī's career, as it represents a public manifestation of his sense of his own intellectual independence from the school tradition and his determination to set forth on the path of his own theology in his own terms. Seen within the institu-

tional framework of the Niẓāmiyya college and its relationship to the Ashʿarite theological tradition, this is no trivial event.

Mīzān seems to have been written shortly, if not immediately, before al-Ghazālī's retreat from the Niẓāmiyya and Baghdad in 488/1095.[8] Though we cannot determine whether it was completed before *Iqtiṣād* or after, it will be more convenient to deal with it first, for reasons that will become apparent. The work is focused entirely on the perfection of the rational soul and accordingly a number of the most basic themes and elements that are to appear throughout al-Ghazālī's later works are presented quite explicitly. "The happiness of the soul and its perfection consist in its being engraved with the essences of the divine things (*ḥaqāʾiqu l-ʾumūri l-ʾilāhiyyah*) and its becoming one with them so that it seem to be they" (p. 26, 4ff.; cp. p. 12, 19ff. *et alibi*). This "engraving" is received "from without, and the without here is the Well Guarded Tablet and the souls of the angels, for [all] essential knowledge (*al-ʿulūm al-ḥaqīqiyyah*) is engraved upon them in an engraving which is in act" (p. 29, 4ff.; cp. p. 17, 13ff., cited in chap. 2, n. 37, above; also p. 24, 7ff.). The best way to achieve this "is to be content with the way of the sufis, i.e., to persevere in worship and to cut off worldly ties, because the search for rational knowledge (*al-baḥthu ʿani l-ʿulūmi l-kasbiyyah*) in order to achieve a permanent habitus in the soul is extremely difficult" (p. 29, 15ff.).[9] If, however, one's worldly ties are terminated, "mercy flows down upon him and the hidden truth of the celestial world (*sirru l-malakūt*) is revealed to him and the essential natures become manifest to him; he need only be prepared" (p. 26, 15f.). "If one strives with his soul, he enters the horizon of the angels" (p. 24, 14). Consistently with this, al-Ghazālī appears to agree with the thesis, here attributed to "the sufis and the metaphysicians amongst the falāsifa," that at death the soul becomes permanently separated from the body: the pleasures and pains of the next life are purely intellectual, those depicted in the revelation being only images for what cannot be imagined (pp. 5f.; cp. *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 484f., translated on p. 65 above). That al-Ghazālī cites the falāsifa thus in *Mīzān* is not surprising in that he associates their ethical teaching with that of the sufis, from whom he claims it was taken (*Munqidh*, p. 109). It is, moreover, consistent with the pattern of *Miʿyār*, at the end of which *Mīzān* is anticipated and which is cited in

it a number of times (e.g., pp. 17 and 33). His association of teachings of "the metaphysicians," "the falāsifa who believe generally in God and the last day" (p. 12, 8f.), with those of the sufis is too transparent a fiction, however, for even al-Ghazālī to have expected it to legitimize his obvious commitment to the psychology and metaphysics of the falāsifa in the eyes of his fellow Shāfiʿites.

At the very end of *Mīzān* (pp. 124ff.) al-Ghazālī raises the question of the nature of doctrinal systems (*madhāhib*) and of how the diverse systems of the sufis, of the Ashʿarite school, and of certain individual mutakallimūn, cited in the course of the work, are related. Since understanding seeks a single, integrated system, where lies the truth in relation to these divergent systems? He replies that for most people there is only one system, that which they were taught—Ashʿarite, Muʿtazilite, Karrāmite, or whatever—and to which they are totally committed (p. 126, 4ff.). For some, however, there are really three systems (p. 124, 11ff.): (1), that to which the individual gives his allegiance in contests and disputations, (2) that which he imparts in teaching and instruction, and (3) "that which he believes privately concerning the theoretical matters that have been revealed to him" (*mā nkashafa lahu mina l-naẓariyyāt*). The first two derive from the social and religious milieu in which he was raised and trained; he is an Ashʿarite or a Muʿtazilite, a Shāfiʿite or a Ḥanbalite. They represent two levels of his activity as a fellow of a particular school, the first in his institutional interaction with fellows of other schools and the followers of other masters than his own, and the second in his routine teaching of his students within the school. (You cannot tell simple people that God is neither within the world nor outside it nor contiguous to it but must insist to them that God is on the Throne: p. 125, 10ff.)[10] The third system is a private matter between the individual and God, something to be divulged only to those who by nature and disposition and by virtue of their advanced learning and insight are capable of receiving it. The reader is advised to seek the truth through systematic reflection (*al-naẓar*) so as to become himself the master of a system (*ṣāḥibu madhhab*). The first two of these belong to the ordinary school discipline of kalām, a science instituted to protect the normative beliefs of the orthodox community against heresy and unbelief; and the third is what in *Iḥyāʾ* he will call *ʿilm al-mukāshafah,* a higher theoretical science which embraces the understanding of

the grounds of the higher practical science, *ʿilm al-muʿāmalah*. Here, thus, we find in *Mīzān* the program of al-Ghazālī's later writing, as it presents some of the most important elements of his theology and at the same time informs us clearly of his attitude toward the school traditions and how basically he understands and classifies the various levels of discourse and rhetoric that are employed in his writing.[11] It seems, however, that al-Ghazālī may very well have felt that his espousal of the doctrines of the falāsifa in *Mīzān* had been somewhat imprudent in being so openly presented as to provoke unnecessary conflict, for he nowhere cites the work in any of his later writings. It is for this reason that we have drawn but sparingly on *Mīzān* in the earlier sections of the present study.

Though completed only a year or so after *Miʿyār* and *Miḥakk,* shortly before his departure from Baghdad, *Iqtiṣād* may appear at first glance to betoken a kind of retrogression in the direction of traditional Ashʿarite teaching. Its manifest character and form are, however, fully explained and justified in terms of the doctrine set out at the end of *Mīzān* concerning the simultaneous adherence to three distinct "systems," each of which has its own proper function and validity as employed by the religious and intellectual elite. *Iqtiṣād* seems to be anticipated in *Tahāfut* (p. 78), where he says that he intends to write a work entitled *Qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid* in which, instead of merely refuting the errors of the falāsifa, he will set out the true doctrine (*al-madhhab al-ḥaqq*). The matter is problematic, however, since the announced title appears only later with the publication of *R. al-Qudsiyyah fī qawāʾid al-ʿaqāʾid* (for the title of which, see *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 104, 14). On the other hand, he does say in *Iḥyāʾ* (1, p. 98, 3f.) that *Iqtiṣād* is devoted exclusively to the foundational tenets of Islam (*qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid*).[12] It is thus contextually associated with *Qudsiyyah* as belonging to that elementary or introductory level of belief that is to be surpassed as the reader, continuing through *Iḥyāʾ*, assimilates *ʿAjāʾib al-qalb* (Book XXI) and progresses through the rest of the work. *Iqtiṣād* is, moreover, formally associated with *Tahāfut* in that later, in *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān* (p. 21), al-Ghazālī refers to both along with *Mustaẓhirī* as being kalām works, without mentioning *Qudsiyyah*. Taking these three together, then, one sees that the counterpositions which were not normally treated in the traditional manuals (counter-

positions which were topically of far greater importance at the time) had been dealt with in *Tahāfut* and *Mustaẓhirī*, and that in *Iqtiṣād* we have a third kalām work, this time following the traditional form of the manuals in setting forth the basic tenets of Islam as construed and understood within the Ashʿarite school (*madhhabu l-ḥaqq* for disputation and for routine teaching) and defending them against the countertheses of the school's traditional opponents.[13] Against the traditional adversaries, chiefly the Muʿtazila, it was altogether fitting and proper to employ something like the traditional dialectic, whereas in writing against the falāsifa and the Bāṭiniyya, al-Ghazālī had deemed it appropriate to employ quite different terms and assumptions. In any case, it is evident from the reference to *Miʿyār* and *Miḥakk* in the preface to *Iqtiṣād* (p. 15) that the latter is in no way to be read as a repudiation of what he had said in the former two works, but rather as extending the context in which they are to be understood, that is, as evidencing their compatibility, at least on one level, with the general doctrine and practice of the Ashʿarite school. It is thus, so to speak, a public gesture on al-Ghazālī's part, i.e., a concrete acknowledgment of the place and function of the school theology within the religious community. At the same time, however, he deplores the theoretical worthlessness of ordinary kalām—its inherent failure to grasp the "true natures of things"—several times in very pointed terms (e.g., pp. 136 and 195); and together with this he seasons his arguments with expressions taken from the lexicon of the falāsifa and unambiguously indicates his own adherence to at least some elements of their psychology (e.g., pp. 45, 168ff., and 172f.). These things are elements of the upgraded, intellectually higher level kalām he claims (*Arbaʿīn*, p. 24; cited on p. 31 above) to have presented here. But, superior though it may be to the common kalām of the schools, it is still kalām and so remains at a level on which it is inappropriate to delve seriously into intellectual problems, something he is careful to point out (e.g., pp. 136 and 215). In all of this al-Ghazālī plainly is telling the reader there is a higher level of theological understanding, if not urging him to move in that direction.

Whatever may have been the originally projected form of the *Qawāʾid al-ʿaqāʾid* announced in *Tahāfut*, it is not altogether unlikely that *Iqtiṣād* was ultimately composed with an eye to opposition that al-Ghazālī was encountering on the part of some of his colleagues.

This would seem to be a part of the reason for his somewhat heavy-handed (though genuinely insightful) account (pp. 168ff.) of the way in which the common run of school theologians—Ashʿarite and Muʿtazilite alike—are mindlessly committed to the teachings of their masters and so unable to give any serious attention or consideration to other views, however reasonable. And so also it would seem to be the only plausible explanation for his abject repudiation of what he says some had inferred to be implied by his argument concerning the resurrection in *Tahāfut*. The reference to *Tahāfut* may, in fact, be a rhetorical smoke screen, as he would not likely have wished to refer to his discussion of life, the pneuma, and the soul in *Miḥakk*, and certainly not to *Mīzān* either, if the latter had been published before the completion of *Iqtiṣād* or if the contents of its first chapters were already known to some of his colleagues in the Niẓāmiyya.[14]

In *Iqtiṣād*, in sum, al-Ghazālī's aim is to present what for him is a first- or a second-level system, his "*madhhab* for scholastic disputation" or his "*madhhab* for public teaching." It conforms at least superficially to the traditional Ashʿarite system, for this is the *madhhab* to which he was in principle committed by virtue of his training under al-Juwaynī and by his position in the Niẓāmiyya, just as his *madhhab* in law was that of al-Shāfiʿī. His association with the school—his status as a recognized master of Shāfiʿite law—was important to him. For the sake of his own understanding of the completeness of his religious and theological vision, he needed to demonstrate his formal bond to the Ashʿarite school in terms that would not conflict with his private or interior *madhhab*. The presence of various scattered indications that there is a higher-level *madhhab* that one may attain is integral to the intended character of the book and its place within the corpus of his writings. The appendix on the criteria for validating charges of unbelief can be seen to suit this context on several levels.

The task that lay before al-Ghazālī following his nervous collapse and departure from Baghdad, then, was to communicate his theology more completely and in ways that would make it more readily acceptable to his fellows. As we have seen, he had already begun to move in this direction in writing *Miḥakk*. The more properly metaphysical and theological elements of the system (including his Neoplatonizing psychology) had now to be represented in language and in forms

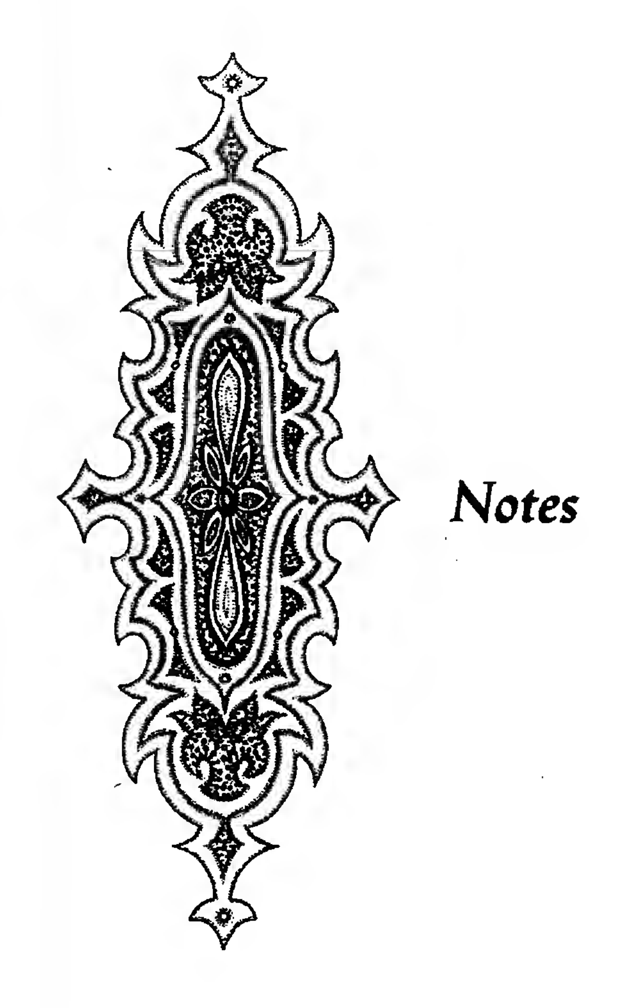
that were more integrally associated with the religious tradition as such so as more easily to display it as an all-encompassing theoretical vision of the underlying truths of the revelation. Given the circumstances and the stress he had been under, it is not surprising that al-Ghazālī began with *Qudsiyyah,* an Ashʿarite catechism. Following this elementary exercise in traditional catechetics, however, he produced his grand synthesis, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn,*[15] which was almost immediately received with as great and as wide acclaim as he might reasonably have hoped for. This done, he proceeded to set out many of the most important elements of his theology more explicitly in conceptual terms in *al-Maqṣad al-asnā, K. al-Arbaʿīn,* and *Mishkāt al-anwār.*

Al-Ghazālī was evidently satisfied that with the publication of this series of works he had presented the core of his theological teaching in appropriate form and in ample detail. With *Qisṭās,* then, he returns to a more popular level work, at a time when most likely he was already thinking about coming out of retirement. Nor is it mere coincidence that *Fayṣal,* an apologetic work in which he defends the validity of his departures from traditional Ashʿarite orthodoxy, was written at the time of his return to teaching at Nishapur (499/1106). And *Fayṣal* is followed by his autobiography, *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl,* itself an essentially apologetic work, in which, while taking a somewhat conciliatory stance toward the mutakallimūn, he parades his exceptional intellectual endowments and insists both on the profound sincerity of his quest for knowledge of "the essential natures of things" and on his ultimate achievement, through the assiduous practice of sufi asceticism, of a level of religious insight and cognitive certitude that cannot be communicated to ordinary scholars. The subject of his last major work, *Mustasfā,* is the fundamental principles of religious law, but here too, one notes his general program continues, as he intends, by the verbatim introduction of extensive portions of *Miḥakk* into its prefatory sections, to draw *ʾuṣūl al-fiqh* more fully and explicitly within the compass of his overall theological system. Conflicts with the school theologians, however, were not to be resolved, and after his final retirement from teaching he gave full vent to his animosity against the mutakallimūn in the polemic of *Iljām.*

Al-Ghazālī never composed a complete, systematic summary of

his theology in formally conceptual terms. His theology is, in some respects, at least, rather superficial; the general structure is there, but in a number of places seems incomplete. There are several quite basic questions concerning which the texts offer us little or no clear indication of what al-Ghazālī's views might have been. Whether he was fully aware of their importance and had thought them through is, in fact, questionable.[16] These, however, are matters that need not concern us here, as the facts regarding the primary subject of our present study would seem to be clear enough. Al-Ghazālī was an Ashʿarite in the sense that it was their school (*madhhab*) that he associated himself with as regards teaching and instruction of religious doctrine on a general or elementary level. This is unambiguously evidenced in *Qudsiyyah.* There is no evidence, on the other hand, that he held the traditional doctrine of the school as his own, personal *madhhab,* "the theoretical matters that had been revealed to him and that as such he privately believed" (*Mīzān,* p. 124, 13f.). It is the dialectical interplay of these several levels, in many works and in many ways, that has caused difficulties for students of al-Ghazālī's works and given some the impression of gross inconsistency.

The focus of our study has been narrow, and even within these limits there are many things that remain to be clarified. The general pattern, however, would seem to be well-enough substantiated on the evidence of the texts to offer a useful basis for further investigation.



Notes

Preface

1. Publication of the acta of this meeting foundered on a shoal of inaction and indifference. The contributions having to do with Islam were eventually published in *Revue des études islamiques* 55–57 (1987–89), which appeared only in the latter part of 1992 and then without the contributors' ever having been given an opportunity to read the proofs.

1. Introduction

1 The one, *Ikhtiṣār,* has been known for some time now; the other, contained in the untitled manuscript, Escorial no. 1610 (copied 552/1157), has not hitherto been identified.

2 The work has been translated a number of times. The best (though not altogether satisfactory) in English are those of W. M. Watt, *Faith and Practice of Ghazali* (London, 1953), and R. McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfillment* (Boston, 1980).

3 L. Gardet and M. M. Anawati, *Introduction à la théologie musulmane* (Paris, 1948), pp. 113ff. Similarly, Watt holds that throughout his life al-Ghazālī adhered to the traditional teaching of the Ashʿarite school (*Muslim Intellectual* [Edinburgh, 1963], p. 119), and while noting that there are conspicuous differences between al-Juwaynī's *Irshād* and al-Ghazālī's *Iqtiṣād*, he concludes that they are essentially formal and not substantive (pp. 122f.). Watt's book contains a number of interesting suggestions, but he has almost no sense of what philosophy and theology really are and so little understanding of the theoretical issues and problems discussed and argued in the texts. Some more recent studies contribute little to the question, e.g., H. Atay, "Mawqif al-Ghazālī min ʿilm al-kalām," in *Ghazālī, la raison et le miracle* (Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, 30) (Paris, 1987), pp. 27–43, and George Makdisi, "Al-Ghazālī, disciple de Shāfiʿī en droit et en théologie," *Ghazālī*, pp. 45–55.

4 Herbert Davidson's conclusion, based on a careful examination of *Mishkāh*, that al-Ghazālī's conception of intellectual beings and the celestial world follows that of Avicenna (*Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroës on Intellect* [Oxford, 1992], pp. 129–144 and 149ff.) corroborates the evidence we shall present here and parallels our own conclusions concerning al-Ghazālī's cosmology, set out in *Creation and the Cosmic System* (Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, philos.-hist. Kl., 1992/1) (Heidelberg, 1992). See also B. Abrahamov, "Al-Ghazālī's Theory of Causality," *Studia Islamica* 67/68 (1988), pp. 75–89.

5 "Al-Ghazālī, artisan de la fusion des systèmes de pensée," *Journal Asiatique* 278 (1991), pp. 223ff.

6 For a detailed discussion of these matters, see our "The Science of Kalām," *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 2 (1992), pp. 7ff., and "Knowledge and *Taqlīd:* The Foundations of Religious Belief in Classical Ashʿarism," *JAOS* 109 (1989), pp. 37ff.

7 Cf., e.g., *Ishārah*, pp. 17ff., and *Irshād*, p. 3. The thesis of Makdisi and others that the leading masters of the Shāfiʿite school were firmly opposed to systematic theology and stayed clear of kalām as a matter of principle is plainly no longer tenable, as has been pointed out by Joseph van Ess in *ZDMG* 139 (1989), p. 242. Concerning the case of al-Shīrāzī in particular, see E. Chaumont, "Encore au sujet de l'Ashʿarisme d'abū Isḥāq ash-Shīrāzī," *Studia Islamica* 74 (1991), pp. 167ff.; Chaumont quite correctly points to the distinction between al-Shīrāzī's position concerning legal questions and that concerning matters of fundamental theology (*ʾuṣūl al-dīn*), and shows that he followed al-Shāfiʿī in the former and al-Ashʿarī in the latter (pp. 175f.). Note, too, that one has within this context also to distinguish between legal interpretation of the language of the sacred texts and their theological exegesis, as allegorical interpretation is allowed in the latter but not in the former.

2. Al-Ghazālī on the Place of Kalām Amongst the Religious Sciences

1 *Iqtiṣād*, p. 1, 9ff.; so, also, paralleling the last phrase, we find in *Qudsiyya*, 79, 5 (= *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 104, 19), *natāʾij al-ʿuqūl wa-qaḍāyāt al-sharʿ al-manqūl*. For a detailed discussion, see our "Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*," *ZGAIW* 7 (1992), pp. 207ff.

2 Cf., e.g., *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 1–3 and 108, 2; *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 17, 2f. and cp. *Qudsiyya*, p. 79, 4ff. (= *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 104, 19ff.).

3 I have preferred to leave '*jawhar*' (pl. *jawāhir*) untranslated here and in most places in what follows, since what al-Ghazālī means by the word is somewhat problematic, as we shall see. In the translation literature and in the usage of the falāsifa, it is employed as an equivalent of Greek 'οὐσία' (though the concept has a very different place in Avicenna's metaphysics from that which it holds in Aristotle's). In the lexicon of classical kalām it is a categorial term used to name or refer to the atom or indivisible particle (*al-juzʾ*), which is an independent entity (*qāʾimun bi-nafsihī*), as distinguished from the "accident," which is not.

4 Makdisi translates a portion of this passage of *Mustaṣfā* ("The Juridical Theology of Shāfiʿī," *Studia Islamica* 59 [1984], pp. 33f.), but seems neither to recognize the formal basis of the distinction al-Ghazālī makes between kalām and jurisprudence nor to take seriously the assertions he makes concerning the nature of kalām as a religious science. See also the remarks in n. 8 below concerning *Qisṭās*, p. 68, 5.

5 The section concerning God and His attributes in al-Juwaynī's *R. al-Niẓāmiyyah* (pp. 20–42), for example, is ordered under these three topics.

6 Generally speaking, "necessary knowledge" (*ʿilm ḍarūrī*) is defined as any knowledge (true cognition) which is not and cannot be the direct result of something we choose to do or choose not to do, i.e., which is not the result of a rational inference, and which, therefore, we cannot choose to call into question by questioning the premises on which it is based; cf., e.g., *Mujarrad*, p. 248, 10f., *Shāmil* (81), pp. 84f. and *Kāfiyah*, §71, pp. 29f. Included under *al-ʿulūm al-ḍarūriyyah*, therefore, are four of the five grounds of properly justified knowledge mentioned in *Qisṭās*, p. 60 (on which see p. 17 below). Included also will be the insights which come about as the result of asceticism; cf., e.g., *ʿAjāʾib al-qalb* (*Iḥyāʾ*, Book XXI). Concerning "acquired knowledge" (*ʿilm muktasab*), see the references in chap. 2, n. 27.

7 As used here and in '*al-maʿārif al-dīniyyah*' (*Qisṭās*, p. 68, 4), '*al-maʿrifah*' is a general term for religious knowledge, though with al-Ghazālī, as with the sufis, it very often has the connotation of higher, direct religious insight and so is often opposed to scientific or scholarly knowledge (*al-ʿilm*).

(For the use of the word in various senses of religious knowledge, see our "Knowledge and *Taqlīd*," p. 47, n. 24, and p. 54, n. 38.) In *Miḥakk*, p. 77, and *Mustasfā* 1, p. 11, al-Ghazālī identifies *maʿrifah* with the cognitive grasp of essences as such and distinguishes it thus from *ʿilm*, which is the grasp of true propositions; he does not, however, follow this distinction with any consistency at all, as his use of these words is very fluid and has specifically to be understood within each particular context. With the expression '*al-maʿārif al-ʾilāhiyyah*', however, cp. '*al-ʿulūm al-ilāhiyyah*' in *Munqidh*, p. 105, 8, which is somewhat ambivalent since it may, in the context, refer either to theological knowledge as such and in general or to the "theology" of the falāsifa. (The section concerning God and His attributes in *Niẓāmiyyah* is termed "*Bāb al-ʾilāhiyyāt*".) Al-Ghazālī, later in the same chapter of *Munqidh* (pp. 106f.), as also in *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, 8, uses the expression '*al-ʾilāhiyyāt*' specifically to refer to the metaphysics of the falāsifa as such. (Note, however, the occurrence of '*kalām*' for metaphysics in the list of sciences in *Qisṭās*, p. 68, cited in chap. 2, n. 8.) Cf. also the expression '*falsafatu l-ʾilāhiyyīn*' employed for metaphysics in *Munqidh*, p. 156, 6; also note *Mīzān*, p. 12, 8, where he speaks of "the sufis and those falāsifa who believe generally in God and the last day," and ibid., p. 5, 8, where he mentions "*baʿḍu l-ʾilāhiyyīna l-ʾislāmiyyīna mina l-falāsifah*," and p. 6, 16, where he refers to "*al-ṣūfiyyatu wal-ʾilāhiyyīna mina l-falāsifah*," with whose views he associates himself (see below, pp. 95–96). In *Munqidh*, p. 123, he seems to restrict the use of logic to secondary matters which are not plainly presented in the Koran and the Tradition, but this is because of the particular context where he is speaking against the Bāṭiniyya. Note that logic is not the mere rules governing the use of the syllogistic forms, but, for al-Ghazālī assumes the Aristotelian ontology and the valid acquisition of justified premises. We shall return to this shortly.

8 Following Greek usage, one is inclined to consider whatever is juridical to be conventional (belonging to νόμος) as such, since it has to do with the stipulations of the lawgiver. Al-Ghazālī, however, evidently considers the science of the fundamental principles of law (*ʿilmu ʾuṣūli l-fiqh*), as distinct from the science of the applications of the particular mandates of the law, to be a theoretical science; the latter begins from merely probable premises (*muqaddamāt ẓanniyyah*) in order to seek conclusions that are merely probable (see *Miḥakk*, p. 54 and the references in n. 17 below). Thus, in *Miʿyār*, p. 23, 1, he speaks of "*al-ʿulumu l-naẓariyyatu l-ʿaqliyyatu minhā wal-fiqhiyyah*," and so too in *Qisṭās*, p. 68, 5, he lists as regulated by logic "the sciences of arithmetic, geometry, physics, law (*fiqh*), and kalām, and every one which is a real science and not merely conventional (*kullu ʿilmin ḥaqīqiyyin ghayri waḍʿī*)." The occurrence of '*al-fiqhiyyah*" between '*al-ṭabīʿiyyah*" and '*al-kalāmiyyah*" seems

curious in any case; the order is notably different from that of *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, and *Munqidh*, pp. 105f. Al-Ghazālī's downgrading of applied fiqh as opposed to *ʾuṣūl al-fiqh* caused a hostile reaction in some quarters; see Eric Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought* (Princeton, N.J., 1984), p. 99. In *Munqidh*, p. 163, 11f., concerning the healing properties of devotional acts, al-Ghazālī speaks of "*al-ʾawḍāʿu l-sharʿiyyah*". What he means by this is that while the specific characteristics (*khawāṣṣ*) of devotional acts by virtue of which they are efficacious in promoting the soul's advancement in perfection derive from the nature of the soul and its relation to the body; knowledge of this is originally accessible only through prophetic revelation (see p. 67 below), where they are presented in the form of legislative commands.

9 Cf. *Tahāfut*, p. 12, and *al-Qudsiyyah*, p. 79 (= Iḥyāʾ 1, p. 104, 18ff.), and see our "Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*," pp. 241ff. What is for one's ultimate good is known by revelation and so cannot be known through ordinary experience of the material world or through speculative reasoning (e.g., *Munqidh*, pp. 152 and 161ff., *Mustasfā* 1, pp. 61f.).

10 *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, 1 and 15ff., pp. 40f., and p. 97, 13ff.; *Jawāhir*, p. 21; and *Munqidh*, p. 91, 4ff.

11 *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 23, 1f. and 15ff., and p. 98, 17ff.; cp. *Jawāhir*, pp. 23 and 34; cf. also *Iqtiṣād*, p. 13; *Munqidh*, pp. 91f., and *Fayṣal*, p. 71, 6f.

12 Makdisi ("Al-Ghazālī, disciple d'al-Shāfiʿī en droit et en théologie," pp. 48f.) cites this example concerning al-Ghazālī's position with regard to rational theology and the validity of nonliteral interpretation (*taʾwīl*), but, having failed to see the radicality of al-Ghazālī's own theology and its *taʾwīl*, misconstrues the evidence. The assertion (p. 48) that the *Iqtiṣād* "ne représente pas les croyances dogmatiques dont Ghazālī fut convaincu" is simply gratuitous in that no serious evidence is offered as to what al-Ghazālī's genuine dogmatic beliefs might plausibly be. Statements such as that concerning the inflexibility of the Ḥanbalites (e.g., in *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 103, 4) are ignored, while al-Ghazālī's consistent insistence (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 101f. and p. 103, 8ff., and in *Fayṣal* and *Iljām*, on which see pp. 76ff. below) on recognizing the presence of metaphor (*istiʿārah*, less often, *majāz*) in the formal analysis and interpretation of many descriptions of God found in the Koran and prophetic Traditions is ignored along with the radically rationalizing *taʾwīl* that he often suggests and sometimes presents.

13 Note that while he never explicitly identifies himself with the Ashʿarite school, he does speak (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 156, 1, and *Miḥakk*, p. 76, 15, and p. 77, 1) of "our fellows" in contexts in which the Shāfiʿite adherents of the school are unambigously referred to, as also, while giving characteristic Ashʿarite formulations, he speaks (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 106, 12ff., and *Miḥakk*, p. 141, 2) of those who

hold the true doctrine (*ʾahl al-ḥaqq*). Cf. also "*al-ʾaṣḥāb al-mutaqaddimīn*" in *Fayṣal*, pp. 5f., discussed on pp. 76f. below in connection with al-Ghazālī's later conflict with the school.

14 E.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 79, 11ff., where kalām is identified with disputation (*al-jadalu wal-munāẓarah*) and distinguished from science/knowledge (*al-ʿilm*). Kalām is also identified with disputation in *Jawāhir*, pp. 21 and 23. Note that in this he includes the legal scholars too (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 30, 13ff., and *Fayṣal*, p. 70, 5ff.), though the disputational habits of the mutakallimūn are worse (*Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 40).

15 Sulamī, p. 87, and *Ḥilyah* 8, p. 361; so also abū Bakr ibn abī Saʿdān condemns disputation (*al-munāẓarah*), Sulamī, p. 422, 3f. Given al-Ghazālī's generally low opinion of the religious scholars as a class, it is plain that his general disapproval of scholastic dialectic is neither founded in nor directly akin to the dogmatic views of the Ḥanbalites.

16 Many of the mutakallimūn are prevented from attaining deeper insight because of their *taqlīd* to the opinions of their masters; cf., e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 13, 15ff., and generally our "Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*," pp. 231ff. Concerning al-Ghazālī's understanding of *wahm* (Avicenna's "*vis aestimativa*"), cf. *ibid*., pp. 235ff.; *Miḥakk*, pp. 62ff. and 71; and *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 46ff. and 59ff. In *Fayṣal* (pp. 69, 9f. and 70, 2ff.) and *Iljām* (p. 79, 3) al-Ghazālī speaks contemptuously of the arguments of the mutakallimūn as *rusūm*. It would seem likely that in al-Ghazālī's use of '*rasm*' here and in analogous contexts, the word does not have the formal sense that it carries in the logic of the falāsifa but more that which is found in sufi contexts in which it is opposed to '*ḥaqīqah*' to describe something as mere appearance rather than reality; cf., e.g., Sulamī, p. 158, 9, and p. 182, 12. Elsewhere, however, he plainly uses '*rasmī*' in the formal sense it has for Avicenna, e.g., *Miḥakk*, p. 103, 15.

17 This is true of the reasoning of fiqh too (cf., e.g., *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 48f. and *Miḥakk*, pp. 67f.), but in fiqh this is acceptable, since legal conclusions are merely probable opinions (*ẓann;* cf. *ibid*., pp. 43, 54, and 67).

18 Cp. the list in *Miʿyār*, pp. 108ff. Earlier (*Qisṭās*, p. 21), he had described "primary knowledge that is not based on inference" as "acquired either from sense and experience or the basic disposition of the mind" (*ʾimmā mina l-ḥissi wal-tajribati ʾaw-gharīzati l-ʿaql*). In *Iḥyāʾ* 3 (p. 19, 6ff.), following a traditional formula, he says that the primary sources of knowledge are two, viz., the senses and formal reasoning (*al-ḥawāss* and *al-iʿtibār*). The list of the four kinds of primary knowledge, like that of the five sources, would seem most likely derived from Avicenna (cf., e.g., *Ishārāt*, pp. 55ff., and *Burhān*, pp. 95ff.). In *Miḥakk*, pp. 57ff., and *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 44f.) he presents seven sources of knowledge and judgment; here, direct perception is divided into the immediate experiences of one's interior states and external sensibles and

two further kinds of judgment are added, namely, those based on impressions (*al-wahmiyyāt*) and those based on common opinion (*al-mashhūrāt*). The addition of these two sources of judgment is not merely for the sake of completeness, but also no doubt in order to add justification and clarity to his attacks on the intellectual weakness of the religious scholars in general and the mutakallimūn in particular.

19 See *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 12ff. Similarly, he rejects the concept of "states" (*ʾaḥwāl*) held by al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī as confused (*Miḥakk*, pp. 29f.) and implausible (*Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 35, 9f.). Why, however, and in exactly what respect the concept is confused, he does not say.

20 The passage is discussed by M. Marmura in "Ghazali and Demonstrative Science," *JHP* 3 (1965), pp. 193ff., and in "Al-Ghazālī's Attitude Toward the Secular Sciences and Logic," in *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science*, ed. G. F. Hourani (Albany, N.Y., 1975), pp. 105f.

21 Cf., e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 17, 4f., and *Iljām*, p. 87, 6ff. Al-Ghazālī's position here is plainly opposed to the common doctrine of the Ashʿarite school and of al-Juwaynī. It is to be noted that al-Anṣārī presents a lengthy attack on the thesis of the causality of the Aristotelian elements, of natures, proper accidents (*al-ʿaraḍ al-lāzim*), and essential properties (*khāṣṣiyyat al-dhāt*) in *Ghunyah*, foll. 149v ff. Al-Ghazālī employs '*khāṣṣiyyah*' often as a general term for a thing's nature; cf., e.g., *Mishkāh*, p. 79, 12, where he speaks of the *khāṣṣiyyah* of the "perceptive spirit," which is a part of the soul, and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 32, 6f., where he says that the true nature (*ḥaqīqah*) of each being is its *khāṣṣiyyah*, which belongs to it and not to any other. It is in this sense that al-Anṣārī speaks of "*khāṣṣiyyatu l-ʾakwān*" (*Ghunyah*, fol. 38r, 22f.). Some earlier Ashʿarites too speak of the "properties" (*khāṣṣiyyah*) or "natures" (*ṭabīʿah*) of bodies (e.g., al-Bāqillānī, *Hidāyah*, foll. 27v, 15f. and 18r, 1f.), but exactly how this is to be understood within the generally occasionalistic system is not clear.

22 Cf. also *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 52, 12f. In *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 30, 1ff., al-Ghazālī speaks of the astrologer's predictions based on astronomical observations and the physician's prediction of the course of an illness from his observations of the patient's symptoms as inferences founded on causes (*ʾasbāb*) grounded in the knowledge of "the usual courses of God's custom and habit" (*maʿrifatun bi-majārī sunnati l-lāhi wa-ʿādatihī*), which he holds to be invariant. Thus, according to al-Fārābī too, fire's causing combustion is something that happens in most cases but not always and necessarily, since the state of the receiving subject is a condition for the occurrence of the effect (*Nukat*, pp. 107f., §§ 8f.); the relation is what al-Ghazālī speaks of as a "conjunction" (*iqtirān*). The effect follows, given the usual circumstances.

23 Note that al-Kiyāʾ al-Harāsī, a fellow student of al-Ghazālī's under al-

Juwaynī, expressly denies that eating causes satiety (*Uṣūl al-dīn*), fol. 201r, translated in our "Moral Obligation in Classical Muslim Theology," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 11 (1983), p. 209. Against the notion of the concomitance of causes and effects, cf. *Mujarrad*, p. 263, 9ff.

24 "That whose alteration is not in possibility" is that which cannot conceivably be otherwise under any circumstances: what God could not have willed to be otherwise. One notes, thus, that the opening sentence of Book XVII of *Tahāfut* is ambivalent as al-Ghazālī says, "The connection between what is commonly believed to be a cause and what is commonly believed to be an effect is not a necessary one (*ḍarūrī*) in our opinion." If one takes '*ḍarūrī*' in the sense it has in this passage of *Mi'yār*, then the statement is seen to have a very precise meaning and one, moreover, that is almost banal in the context. This is even more true if one understands here *mā al-mawṣūfah* rather than *al-mawṣūlah*, so as to render "the connection between some things that are commonly believed. . . ." Al-Ghazālī's conception of the necessary and the possible follows that of Avicenna (cf., e.g., *Maqṣad*, p. 137, 9ff., translated in *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 62). Concerning his conception of the possibles as essences that are unoriginated and given to God's knowledge as such, see *ibid.*, pp. 52ff.

25 This passage of *Iljām* is translated and discussed in *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 75f. Note that not only is the concept of the soul found here altogether alien to the Ash'arite theology ('soul' "has no referent": *Miḥakk*, p. 133, translated below, chap. 3, p. 60), but the idea that something intrinsic to man should govern the body so as to be the cause of any of its acts is incompatible with their traditional occasionalism (cf., e.g., al-Isfarā'īnī, Fr. no. 48, p. 155).

26 In *Miḥakk*, p. 144 also, al-Ghazālī talks about decapitation and death alongside eating and satiety, being struck a blow and suffering pain, and drugs and healing, as causes and effects. Here, however, he omits decapitation and death when he comes to explain that the actual production of the effect, since it may depend upon the state of the object, does not necessarily follow the usual cause in every case. One should note also that in contrast with the earlier context (p. 136) in which he had suggested that the soul governs the body as God governs the universe, the larger context of the discussion of "causes" at p. 144 is strictly one of law (fiqh), one, that is, which belongs to the second category of doctrinal systems mentioned in *Mīzān* (see chap. 5, p. 96) wherefore any talk about the soul is formally precluded.

27 *Miḥakk*, p. 61, 6f. (reading *ta'bīr* for *t'yyr* in line 7); cp. *ibid.*, p. 80, 6; cited on p. 18 above. The vocabulary here is not unique to al-Ghazālī, for the Ash'arites too commonly speak of the regularity or consistency (*iṭṭirād*, *istimrār*) of "God's custom" (e.g., *Irshād*, p. 180, 9, and *Shāmil* [69], p. 284, 6f.) and of its stability (*mustaqarr*, e.g., *Shāmil*, pp. 489, 1, and 491, 15f.), but where they talk of interruptions or breaks in occasionalistically usual sequences of events, al-Ghazālī leans heavily on the emphatic future of Q35, 42: "you *shall never* find (*lan tajida*) any substitution. . . ."

28 In traditional usage and commonly with al-Ghazālī, *'ilmun muktasab* (*'ilmu ktisāb, al-'ilm al-kasbī*) is knowledge (any true cognition) that is based on inference following reflection and reasoning (cf., e.g., *Mujarrad*, p. 247, 19f., and *Shāmil* [81], pp. 60f.) and concerning which doubts may be raised by calling into question one or both of the premises on which its justification is proposed. '*Ilmu ktisāb*' is, therefore, synonymous with '*ilm naẓarī*' ("speculative knowledge"); cf., e.g., Shīrāzī, '*Aqīdah*, §15, p. 67, and *Mīzān*, p. 29, translated below, chap. 5, p. 95. '*Istidlāl*' and '*i'tibār*' are interchanged, e.g., in *Iḥyā'* 3, p. 17, 29f. Though some scholars, misled perhaps by the terminology and mistrustful of kalām, have tended to find the expressions '*'ilm muktasab*' and '*'ilm ḍarūrī*' (on which, see chap. 2, n. 6 above) unclear and the meaning confused, the concepts are, in fact, quite straightforward and the basic distinction is altogether sound.

29 On the background of these names for logic, see Dmitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (Leiden, 1988), pp. 281f.

30 Thus, for example, the degrees (*rutab*) or levels (*darajāt*) of existence and of the presence/presentation of existence, on which, see below, chap. 4, p. 78.

31 Earlier in the same work he insists that the use of logic is illustrated and taught in the Koran (p. 8; cp. *Munqidh*, p. 123), and in arguing for the validity of drawing a conclusion from two premises he cites Q6,83 as confirming the use of logical reasoning by Abraham (e.g., pp. 18 and 27); this is traditional within the school (cf., e.g., *Luma'*, §11, and *Ishārah*, p. 18, 2–13).

32 One should keep in mind that the forward references in the first two books of *Iḥyā'* to the second half of the work are important for understanding how the often traditional language of Books I and II is to be taken.

33 '*Al-mu'āmalah*' is common among the sufis as a term for the fulfillment of moral duties and devotional practices; al-Sulamī, e.g. (p. 299), reports of abū l-Ḥusayn al-Warrāq that "*kāna 'āliman bi-'ulūmi l-ẓāhiri wa-yatakallamu fī daqā'iqi 'ulūmi l-mu'āmalāti wa-'uyūbi l-'af'āl*"; see also *ibid.*, pp. 158, 3f., 316, 7f. and 351, 12f. and 453, 15ff., and 437f. (Concerning al-Ghazālī's association of the ethics of the falāsifa with the teaching of the sufis in *Mīzān* and *Munqidh*, see chap. 5, p. 95 below.) On the common use of the term in other contexts, cf. Marie Bernard, art. "Mu'āmala," *EI.*[2]

34 'Angels' here refers to separated celestial intelligences. The devils are metaphorically explained in terms of the appetites and the lower powers of the soul and the material mixture (*mazāj*) of the individual's body (e.g., *Iḥyā'*

3, p. 25, 15ff.). (One should probably read *ḥikmah* [wisdom] in place of *ḥukm* [judgment] at p. 20, 28.) It is interesting to note in connection with the interpretation of angels and devils here that in *Jawāhir* (p. 29) he interprets the "two fingers" in the ḥadīth, "The hearts of men are between two of God's fingers . . ." as angels and devils, so that there will be two distinct levels of *ta'wīl* for this ḥadīth, as one passes through a secondary metaphor in order to come finally to the underlying sense. In al-Ghazālī's use, 'the High Council' (the phrase is taken from Q37,8 and 38,69) refers to the highest of the separated intelligences, which is associated with the outermost sphere and functions as the agent intellect (e.g., *Mīzān,* p. 49, 15f.). His use of titles and descriptions taken from the Koran and from Traditions to refer to celestial intellects ("angels") and to the highest in particular, varies, and from one place to another seems to be based on rhetorical criteria, if not whim, and not on any formal systematization of the terminology in terms of a specific hierarchy. In some cases it is not entirely clear whether al-Ghazālī attributes a given function to the angel of the outermost sphere specifically as the direct or proximate cause or remotely as the agent that governs the operation of the whole. This seeming confusion may, however, reflect in some part a use of Ismāʿīlī material; see H. Landholt, "Ghazālī and 'Religionswissenschaft,'" *Asiatische Studien* 74 (1991), pp. 19–72.

35 He says (p. 23, 11ff.) that the physics (*al-ṭabīʿiyyāt*) of the falāsifa, where it is not pure ignorance and so contrary to the revelation, resembles the theories of the physicians (*naẓar al-'aṭibba'*); cp. *Munqidh,* p. 104. That he does not mention psychology here is probably due to the fact that those aspects of it which most interested him had been appended to metaphysics by Avicenna; on this see Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition,* pp. 254ff.

36 That this is the principal point of the introductory classification is not made altogether clear in the discussion of Gardet and Anawati, *Introduction,* pp. 113ff., where the analysis is more narrowly focused on the division, ordering, and classification of the sciences as such.

37 The image of a mirror is important to him; it is employed in *Miʿyār,* p. 164, 9ff.; and in *Iḥyā'* 4, pp. 304, 6ff., and 489, 1ff.; *Mīzān,* p. 24, 7ff.; and *Jawāhir,* p. 13; cp. *al-Nafs al-nāṭiqah,* p. 196, 19ff. Al-Rāzī (*Tafsīr* 2, p. 203, 2ff.), in fact, accuses al-Ghazālī of making here an incompetent attempt to explain the doctrine of the falāsifa. (I am indebted to Anthony Street of the Australian National University for this reference.) In *Mīzān* (p. 12, 20f.) al-Ghazālī employs the language of the falāsifa in presenting the "sufi" thesis that "the perfection peculiar to man is the grasp of the essential nature of the intelligible beings as they really are (*'idrāku ḥaqīqati l-ʿaqliyyāti ʿalā mā hiya ʿalayhi*) apart from general impressions and sensible forms (*al-mutawahhimāt wal-ḥissiyyāt*) in which animals share". That as such, the intellect, as opposed

to imagination, sense, etc., grasps pure abstracts, cf. also, e.g., *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 35, and *Mishkāh,* p. 79, 5.

38 Cp. *Miʿyār,* p. 106, 9ff., where he says "when [the premises] are present in the brain in a special order the soul is ready for the knowledge of the conclusion to come to be in it from God" (*'idhā ḥaḍarat fī l-dhihni ʿalā tartībin makhṣūṣin istaʿaddati l-nafsu li'an yaḥdutha fīhā l-ʿilmu bil-natījati min ʿindi llāh*). Marmura ("Al-Ghazālī on Demonstrative Science," p. 194) interprets this as implying that God creates the knowledge of the conclusion in the soul directly, not through the intermediate causality of an angel (a celestial intelligence which functions as an agent intellect). He therefore reads '*yḥdth*' as passive of the causative stem of the verb (*yuḥdath*); this seems to me much less likely than the active of the intransitive, given the "from God" (*mina llāh*) that follows. There is, moreover, no question of any causal agency here in *Miʿyār,* but only of the soul's readiness (*istiʿdād*) to receive the cognition (cp. the '*injalā'* of *Iḥyā',* loc. cit.). Upon the achievement of actuality of proximate aptitude, in any case, the knowledge is passively received, wherefore to read the passive makes no difference to the proper sense of the statement, since "from God" may not be read as expressing the agent, but as indicating the source in God's original Ordainment of the universal system. In *Mīzān* (p. 17, 13ff.) al-Ghazālī speaks of knowledge that is received from "the angels that are entrusted with human souls," and goes on to say that "this knowledge occurs in them from God only through an intermediary (*'innamā yaḥṣulu fīhā mina llāhi bi-wāsiṭah*); He says, 'it is not man's that God speak to him save by revelation or from behind a veil or by sending a messenger' (Q42,51)." On the operation of this, see also references in chap. 2, n. 41, below. In one respect this is not radically different from the conception of the Ashʿarites, for whom knowledge (*ʿilm*) follows reasoning (*al-naẓar*) but is not *mutawallid;* see also chap. 3, n. 60, below, and see the references in our "The Science of Kalām," p. 10, n. 5. Concerning how the conclusion which is contained in the premises "in potency" comes to actuality, al-Ghazālī mentions in *Mustaṣfā* (1, p. 53) the Muʿtazilite thesis alongside several Ashʿarite theses and his own (attributed to the falāsifa), but concludes by saying that to go into the truth of the matter "is not appropriate to our present context." In any event, for the Ashʿarites and al-Ghazālī both, as well as for al-Fārābī and Avicenna, the agent intellect acts *θύραθεν*. One notes here that in contrast to the doctrine of Aristotle and the Christian thinkers of the Latin West, none of the falāsifa holds that the rational soul or intellect is or possesses as an element or aspect of its own being the active power of its own act; rather, the human intellect receives its proper actuality through the action of an external, celestial agent. With Avicenna and al-Ghazālī, however, the passivity of the rational soul is absolute, since the internal acts which bring about the conditions for

the soul's reception of the forms from the agent intellect are the determinate effects, direct or indirect, of external causes.

39 The image here is founded on the connotations of '*al-natījah*' (the conclusion of a syllogism), which is derived from the verb '*nataja, yantiju*', the base meaning of which is to give birth, generally of animals. Al-Ghazālī makes an elaborate play on the connotations of the word in *Iljām,* pp. 68f., concerning which see *Creation and the Cosmic System,* p. 76, n. 150.

40 The particular work or activity (*ʿamal*) of the scholars and the sages is "to acquire the sciences as such and to impart them to the mind" (*iktisābu nafsi l-ʿulūmi wa-jtilābuhā ʾilā l-qalb*) (*Iḥyāʾ* 3, pp. 20f.); note the use of '*iktisāb*' here: as distinguished from the knowledge of the "saints," the metaphysical knowledge of the scholars and the sages is conceptual and is acquired through rational inference. Note too that 'sages' (*al-ḥukamāʾ*) is commonly employed to designate the falāsifa.

41 See the remarks in our *Creation and the Cosmic System,* p. 45, and the references there in n. 81 and concerning the Throne (identified with the Well Guarded Tablet) as the first created intellect associated with the outermost sphere; see also *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 20, 3ff., cited in chap. 4, n. 14, below. Al-Ghāzālī's usage of these expressions is not everywhere consistent, as often, following traditional understanding of the word, he takes 'Throne' to refer to the outermost sphere as such. For the image of engraving, cf., e.g., *Mīzān,* p. 26, 4ff., cited on p. 95 below. The agent intellect is referred to in *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 16, 11ff., as a pen (*qalam*) with which God writes on the intellect, "one of God's creations which He has made the cause of the actual engraving of true cognitions on human hearts" (*khalqun min khalqi llāhi jaʿalahu sababan li-ḥuṣūli naqshi l-ʿulūmi fī qulūbi l-bashar*). That the reception occurs automatically once the human intellect is "ready" (*mustaʿadd*) is plainly implied by *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 19, 27f.; cf. also *Mīzān,* p. 18, 5ff.

42 On this cf. *Creation and the Cosmic System,* pp. 45f. and 75f. The angel of the "Throne" is named an 'intellect' according to *Fayṣal* (p. 41, where it is also said to be referred to metaphorically in scriptural references to God's "hand").

43 In *Maqṣad* and elsewhere al-Ghazālī associates or identifies God's *taqdīr* (his original apportioning creation according to order and measure) with His knowledge and will, His judgment (*ḥukm*), and His wisdom. With this, note the wording of *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 112, 12 (translated in chap. 3, p. 57, below), where he speaks of "*ʾasbābun muqaddaratun fī ʿilmi llāh.*" God's Accomplishment (*al-qaḍāʾ*), following the use of the verb in Q41,12, al-Ghazālī associates with His creating (*ikhtirāʿ*) and bringing the universe (the primary, "universal and permanent causes") to actual existence (*ʾījād*) and so with his

general providence and liberality (e.g., *Maqṣad,* p. 98, and *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 94, 8f. and cp. *Najāh,* p. 302, 19f.).

3. Two "Ashʿarite" Tracts

1 This problem has been most sharply raised by Prof. Marmura in several articles. He understands al-Ghazālī to follow the basic doctrine of the Ashʿarite school against "[Avicenna's] concept of a necessitating God" ("Al-Ghazālī's Attitude to the Secular Sciences and Logic," in *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science,* ed. G. F. Hourani [Albany, N.Y., 1975], p. 107), and to hold, for example, that every occurrence in the world is "the direct creation of God" ("Ghazālī and Demonstrative Science," p. 183) and accordingly suggests that one should read "the causal language used in the *Miʿyār* in occasionalist terms" (*ibid.,* p. 193). Later, while still asserting that according to al-Ghazālī "divine power can intervene in the natural order" ("Al-Ghazālī on Bodily Resurrection and Causality in *Tahafut* and the *Iqtiṣad,*" *Aligarh Journal of Islamic Thought* 2 [1989], p. 47), and interpreting references to the consistent order of natural events by expressions such as '[God's] causing things to occur in consistent patterns' (*ʾijrāʾ al-ʿādah*) as implying that the patterns are governed by no intrinsic principles or natural laws but occasionalistically by God's immediate activity (ibid., p. 53), he concludes (pp. 59ff.) to al-Ghazālī's putting forward a "modified Aristotelian theory" which recognizes the presence in some things of natural properties by which they are capable of specific kinds of action and passion, but one that is premised on the Ashʿarite notion that the divine act is voluntary and concludes that this modified Aristotelian system is introduced into *Tahāfut,* not as a theory which al-Ghazālī himself subscribes to, but simply for the sake of argument (ibid., pp. 59 and 65). Abrahamov ("Al-Ghazālī's Theory of Causality," p. 91) takes it that al-Ghazālī is deliberately inconsistent "in order to conceal his true doctrine."

2 Al-Anṣārī follows the teaching of al-Juwaynī for the most part very closely; this is not entirely the case with al-Harāsī, whose *Uṣūl al-dīn* deserves serious study. One should note here that al-Anṣārī (*Ghunyah,* foll. 120r and 142v) accuses al-Juwaynī of inconsistency because of the differences of what he had said regarding the creation of human acts in *Niẓāmiyyah* and in his major kalām works.

3 The Karrāmiyya are reported (e.g., *Farq,* p. 222, and *Milal,* p. 192) to have held a position on this analogous to that of the Muʿtazila. Only the Muʿtazila are mentioned, however, when the topic is taken up in *Mustaṣfā* (1, p. 58ff).

4 By 'being aroused' (*inbi'āth*), he means the response that, given the prior psychological state of the subject, is caused deterministically by some power of the soul either because of the act of another power or by some external stimulus. The word is used in the same sense elsewhere in *Iqtiṣād*, e.g., at p. 173, translated in chap. 3, p. 38; cf. also the references and the discussion in *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 26, n. 39, and generally pp. 22ff. His use of '*thamarah*' (fruit, product) in the present passage is to be understood within the same context of psychological determinism in which he will speak of human actions as the "products of moral character"; see *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 76, n. 150.

5 References to nature are not infrequent in *Iqtiṣād:* pp. 8 (cited on p. 32 above), 47, 68f., 171f., and 195 (cited on p. 34 above).

6 Al-Ghazālī's definition of the ethically obligatory or necessary superficially resembles one of the traditional definitions, e.g., that the ethically obligatory is that for omission of which there is the threat of [God's] punishment (for the definitions, cf. *Kāfiyah*, pp. 38ff., cited in our "Moral Obligation," p. 208, n. 15), but in the context is differently understood; on this cf. *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 67f. Al-Ghazālī's analysis of other ethical terms ('good', 'bad', 'pointless': *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 161f., and see also *Qudsiyyah*, p. 90, 15ff. = *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 112, 1ff., and generally *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 58ff.) is analogously rationalizing and, albeit squarely contrary to the intuitionist deontology of the Mu'tazila, is nonetheless incompatible with the traditional Ash'arite doctrine which grounds them exclusively in God's gratuitous command and prohibition. For al-Ghazālī (as also for the Mu'tazila), the reason (or cause) of an act's (or omission's) being good or bad or obligatory (necessary) has its foundation in the natural good of the agent, so that ethical "causes" (*'ilal*) can be fully rationalized, directly or indirectly, in terms of the nature of the agent and the causal relationships which obtain between actions and their results. He cannot, thus, consistently make the radical separation between juridical "causes" and the commonly observed sequences of events as is stated, for example, by al-Harāsī (see our "Moral Obligation," pp. 209f.). Al-Ghazālī's revised conception of moral obligation and necessity is presented already in *Miḥakk* (pp. 141ff.).

7 On this see our "Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlīd*," pp. 235ff., and the references there cited. Note also the appeal to natural disposition and nature in the reply to the Mu'tazila in *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 171ff.

8 Essentially, the same statement is made in *Mi'yār* (p. 195). There, one might be inclined to discount it or not to take it altogether literally on the grounds that the stated purpose of the work is to set out the terminology and logic of the falāsifa. When it occurs in *Iqtiṣād*, however, one has to take more serious account of its implications for al-Ghazālī's theology; that God's

will to create this universe is included under this necessity is spelled out in *Iljām* (pp. 68f.). The statement at the opening of this section (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 174, 11) is also to be noted, in that he says "*yajūzu li-llāhi 'an lā yakhluqa l-khalq*" (it is permissible for God that he not create mankind), as it plainly addresses the question of ethical necessity which is under discussion. He does not say '*yajūzu 'an lā yakhluqa llāhu . . .*' which might be taken to assert or imply that it is concretely possible that God not have created mankind. Though the statement does not and is not meant to assert that God necessarily creates from eternity, the theological significance of it is nonetheless considerable; see *Creation and the Cosmic System*, §§4.3f.

9 *Maqṣad*, p. 98; cf. *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 42, n. 72. The nature of the human soul and its activities, however, belong (at least in part and in this life) to the sublunary realm and so are alluded to in a number of places in *Iqtiṣād*, even though al-Ghazālī refuses to go into the matter as such (e.g., p. 215, discussed on p. 56 below).

10 Using the terms in this way, then, the one ('*khalaqa, yakhluqu*') is used of God's "creation" in the sense of the original determination of the universe in God's knowledge, wisdom, and will and the other of "creation" as the original ordering of the universe in which all future events are determined. On these terms and their association with God's attributes, see chap. 2, n. 43.

11 Cf., e.g., *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 52, 23 et alibi pass.; concerning the expression, which occurs also in Avicenna (e.g., *Ilāhiyyāt*, p. 4, 16), see *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 18, n. 18. The idea that one has to avoid being distracted by various opportunities, advantages, and means of livelihood (*'asbāb*) in order to live in the immediate presence of God, the one who presents them as such (*al-musabbib*), is not uncommon with the earlier sufis (cf., e.g., *al-Sulamī*, pp. 294, 353, 422f, and 449, 1f.), but al-Ghazālī's intention in using the expression is plainly that of Avicenna. Here again, we have an example of al-Ghazālī's taking a locution employed in religious contexts and adapting it to his own formal system within the context of which it takes on a quite different meaning. Cp. also the definition of *tawḥīd* cited from al-Junayd (*Risālah* 4, p. 42): "*'an ta'lama 'anna qudrata llāhi fī l-'ashyā'i bi-lā mizāj wa-ṣan'ahu lil-'ashyā'i bi-lā 'ilāj wa-'illata kulli shay'in ṣan'uhu wa-lā 'illata li-ṣan'ihī.*" Thus, in speaking of the proof of the existence of the necessary existent from the contingency of the world, al-Ghazālī speaks (*Miḥakk*, p. 93, 1f.) of effects' not being validly attributable to contingent entities (*'adamu ṣiḥḥati stinādi l-ta'thīri 'ilā l-ḥawādith*), but this is not the same as saying they have no effect or causality whatsoever (*lā ta'thīra lahā*), as do the traditional Ash'arites (e.g., *Irshād*, p. 210, 3f., and below, chap. 3, nn. 28 and 30).

12 There is a variant for *bil-jabarūt* here which reads *bil-malakūt*, but since the latter in al-Ghazālī's use is a synonym for the celestial realm and all sub-

lunary events flow determinately from above, the sense remains essentially the same.

13 So also he says that the soul uses (*istaʿmala*) the body; see chap. 2, n. 25, above and the discussion of the soul below on pp. 55–63. For the use of '*sakhkhara, yusakhkhiru*' (reflecting the wording of Q13,2; 16, 14 et alibi pass.), cp., e.g., Avicenna, *Aqsām,* pp. 113f.

14 Note with regard to this passage that the relationships and interactions between the faculties of the human agent and their physiological effects (through the functioning of the pneuma) do not immediately involve the cosmic system and so are more or less clearly alluded to in a number of places in *Iqtiṣād,* as when he refers to nature in the passage immediately above. Nor, since they are not subject to human volition, does allusion to them directly raise the question of efficient causality in the voluntary acts of human agents.

15 See, e.g., above, chap. 2, pp. 19–21, concerning al-Ghazālī's discussion of empirically founded premises in *Miʿyār,* pp. 109f. and cf. *Creation and the Cosmic System,* p. 59.

16 He similarly bows out of stating his position clearly and completely in a number of places in *Iqtiṣād,* as he does also in other works.

17 Thesis 6 (p. 40), that God is not an "accident," stands as an article normally included here in the traditional manuals in order to exclude God from both of the two most general classes of created beings.

18 Cf. also *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 16, 23ff., and *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 45f., cited above in chap. 2, p. 18, and chap. 2, n. 8.

19 This, like so much of al-Ghazālī's usage, also reflects the elements of traditional religious language, as, for example, the "storehouses of the spirits" (*khazāʾin al-ʾarwāḥ*) are said to be in the sky also in *Mushkil,* p. 198, 13f.; it is only when such locutions are heard within the broader context of al-Ghazālī's thought that their formal implications surface.

20 With "both by nature and the revelation," cp. the "*ʿaqlan wa-sharʿan*" of Avicenna's *al-Nafs al-nāṭiqah,* pp. 196, 17f. and p. 197, 1.

21 Cited also in *Iljām,* pp. 60f. A rationalization of why, for the good of simple people, the Prophet occasionally spoke in language that has to be interpreted metaphorically or allegorically is given in *Iljām,* pp. 97ff., on which see chap. 4 below.

22 Most Ashʿarite authorities do not accept the equivalence of '*istīlāʾ*' for '*istiwāʾ*'. In *Qudsiyya* (p. 83, 18 = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 107, 14) al-Ghazālī offers '*istīlāʾ*' as an interpretation also for expressions that speak of God's being on high. Al-Ghazālī's *taʾwīl* of the metaphor will be presented without ambivalence in *Iljām* (pp. 68f.) where he states that it refers to God's necessary governance of the universe through the outermost sphere.

23 Though both interpretations are to be found in Ashʿarite exegesis (e.g., *Mushkil,* pp. 79f.), the angel is there interpreted as bringing "suggestions"; cp. *Taʿarruf,* p. 62, and *Risālah* 4, p. 191, 32ff. Abū Yaʿlā condemns the first interpretation offered by al-Ghazālī (*al-Muʿtamad,* p. 55, 11ff., §90). It is interesting to compare al-Ghazālī's interpretation of "ascends the Throne" with that offered by al-Anṣārī in *Sharḥ al-Irshād* (fol. 144v, 17ff.), where he says, "this has to refer either to height and majesty or to the meaning of 'mastering' (*al-qahr*) or it intends some action and the reason it is particular with respect to the Throne, is that [the Throne] is the most immense of created beings; 'ascending the throne' may be an expression for the order (*intiẓām*) of the heavens and the earth and everything between them, for kings in our world are able to ascend the throne only when the affairs of the kingdom are subject to their ordering." This finds analogies in al-Ghazālī's exegesis, but does not mention the angel of the Throne or in any way suggest that it has the role of universal intellect of the falāsifa.

24 He notes in *Fayṣal* (pp. 33f.) that the Ḥanbalites accuse the Ashʿarites of unbelief because of their interpretation of texts which assert God's *fawqiyyah* and His *istiwāʾ* (cp. *al-Muʿtamad,* p. 54, 14ff., §89 and p. 57, §93; the thesis that '*istiwāʾ*' is equivalent to '*istīlāʾ*' is condemned as a Muʿtazilite interpretation in *al-Muʿtamad,* p. 54, §89).

25 Cf., e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 241–50, portions of which are translated and discussed in *Creation and the Cosmic System,* pp. 23ff.

26 Al-Ghazālī, as we have noted, holds that the act of the will is the proximate efficient cause of the activation of the power to act and so of the occurrence of the act (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 248, 24), the act of the will being itself caused necessarily by the occurrence of the antecedent motivation, etc. Al-Ghazālī's formulation here in *Iqtiṣād* somewhat resembles that of al-Ashʿarī, although his intention is altogether different. Al-Ashʿarī (unlike the masters of the following generations) consistently speaks of the human act as "occurring by virtue of" the human agent's power (*yaqiʿu bihā*) (see *Lumaʿ,* p. 42, 1, *Mujarrad,* p. 92, 6ff. p. 94, 7ff., and p. 119, 9ff.), and he often says that there must be a concomitant act of the will (e.g., *Mujarrad,* p. 93, 17ff.); he speaks also of the human agent's power as having an "effect" (*taʾthīr*) on the event. For al-Ashʿarī, however, 'occur' (*waqaʿa, yaqiʿu*) is an equivocal expression (cf. *Mujarrad,* p. 92, 9f.). All the real properties and attributes of the human act (*jamīʿu ʾaḥkāmihi wa-ṣifātihī*) are the immediate effects of God's causing it to exist (*Mujarrad,* p. 94, 7ff.), and God does not cause the existence of the event through or by means of the human agent's power (*Mujarrad,* p. 119, 9ff.). It is because of its correlation (*taʿalluq*) to the individual instance of created power that the given event is described as a human act or "performance" (*iktisāb*) (*Mujarrad,* p. 93, 14–15); i.e., it is because of the simultaneous pres-

ence of the particular instance of the created power that the event occurs as a performance of the human agent (*ibid.*, p. 92, 9f.). Since his power has no real effect (cf. *Shāmil* [69], p. 182, 14ff.), i.e., no effect on the coming to be (*ḥudūth*) or existence of the event or on any of its real properties or characteristics, its only "effect" is on the status of the event in relation to the human subject in which God creates it. This is what al-Bāqillānī accounts for as the "state" (*ḥāl*) of the act which is effected by the agent's power (cf., e.g., *Ghunyah*, fol. 155v, 12ff.) in a theory which al-Ghazālī considers implausible and confused (see chap. 2, n. 19). Al-Ashʿarī's *'yaqiʿu bihā'* is, thus, by no means equivalent to the *'yaḥṣulu bihā'* of al-Ghazālī, since he holds the definition in which the phrase occurs as valid both for God's power and man's. Again, in contrast to al-Ghazālī's description of their doctrine, the Muʿtazila hold that volition is itself a free and autonomous act which takes place through the agent's power to act by reason of a motivation; the motivation is necessary insofar as it presents the agent with a reason for acting, but it is not the determinant cause of his acting; even strong motivation may occur without the act's ensuing. Similarly, volition may occur without the ensuing occurrence of the act; see our "The Autonomy of the Human Agent in the Teaching of ʿAbd al-Ǧabbār," *Le Muséon* 95 (1982), pp. 323ff. It is important to keep in mind that al-Ghazālī employs *'al-qudrah'* to name both the faculty (the power to act) and the act of the faculty when it moves as he does *'al-'irādah'* both for the will as a faculty and for the individual volition which is its act. In the traditional analysis of the Ashʿarites, one cannot properly speak of faculties or powers at all in the usual sense, since will and *qudrah* are formally conceived as "accidents" and so are occurrences that are created occasionalistically and cease to exist in the moment succeeding that of their creation. Al-Ghazālī, by contrast, speaks of "the powers of the soul" (*quwā l-nafs*) in *Iqtiṣād* (p. 172, translated in chap. 2, p. 38, above) and describes the intellect as a "noble power" (*Miḥakk*, pp. 27f.), and so also will speak of will and the power of voluntary action plainly as faculties (e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 248f. and p. 112, 15f.)

27 The text in the edition of Çubukçu and Atay (p. 92, 3) reads simply *lam yakuni l-maqdūru bi-qudrati l-ʿabd* here, without *mukhtaraʿan*, and no variant is reported. The word does occur, however, in the editions of Cairo (1972), Beirut (1983), and Cairo (Maḥmudī Commercial Press, n.d.), and within the context is plainly to be understood. Note also that one has to read *wal-maqdūr* for *wʾlmqdʾr* at the beginning of line 3.

28 According to the Muʿtazila, all volitions do not result in the occurrence of an action. Al-Ghazālī's statement here recalls the assertion found in many Ashʿarite manuals (e.g., *Ishārah*, p. 37, 12ff.; al-Mutawallī, p. 37, 14; *Irshād*, p. 210, 3ff.; *Shāmil* [81], p. 93, 8f. and *Ikhtiṣār*, fol. 157r, 13f.) that the power of the human agent has no effect on its object (*lā taʾthīra lahā, lā tuʾaththiru fīhī*) but is related to it as cognition is related to its object; in other words, as related to (*mutaʿalliq bi-*) its object, the human power of voluntary action has no effect on it (*Ikhtiṣār*, foll. 127v, 14f. and 129r, 21ff.). Nowhere, however, does he unambivalently state such a thesis, much less assert it. Later in *Iqtiṣād* (pp. 181f.), using language that he employs in setting forth his own teaching in *Iḥyāʾ*, al-Ghazālī says that according to the Muʿtazila volition is, along with other things, a condition for the activation of the power to act. The statement is not correct, at least not for the leading masters of the Basrian school of the Muʿtazila, and it may be that al-Ghazālī did not rightly understand the thesis, but on the other hand it is not implausible that he found it more convenient to misrepresent it and so have to deal only with a straw man.

29 Note that al-Ghazālī's phrasing here has *'li-wuqūʿ'* rather than *'li-ʾīqāʿ'* (to cause it to occur). The expression *'tahayyaʾa li-'* is somewhat ambivalent in the present context. Al-Ghazālī had earlier in the discussion used it of the action with respect to the agent: "*'al-qudrah'* in ordinary language is an expression for the attribute by virtue of which the act is suitable or ready for the agent (*bihā yatahayyaʾu l-fiʿlu lil-fāʿilu*) and through which it occurs" (p. 81, 5f.). It can be used also of God's knowledge with respect to its objects as fully capable of apprehending them (e.g., *Ghunya*, fol. 67r, 11) so that the broader interpretation which al-Ghazālī puts on *'taʿalluq'* is to be understood with *'tahayyuʾ'* too.

30 Subsequently (p. 98, 4ff.), he indulges in a rather silly cavil; by taking the verb in its primitive sense in ordinary Arabic as to generate or produce, he says that it is absurd to think that one act issues from within another. In contrast to the dialectical arguments of this section of *Iqtiṣād*, al-Ghazālī in fact employs the verb in precisely the same sense as the Muʿtazila, e.g., *Maqṣad*, p. 101, 5.

31 E.g., *Iqtiṣād*, p. 5, 4f. and cp. pp. 158, 3, and 121, 7. That he scarcely discusses the attribute of life at all is conspicuous.

32 For his rejection of the analysis of al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī, cf. also *Miḥakk*, p. 29f. and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 35, 9, cited in chap. 2, n. 19. The statement (*Iqtiṣād*, p. 139, 3f.) that God's essential attributes may be said to be other than His essence, just as an accident is other than the *jawhar* which is its subject, seems bizarre, to say the least; the qualification that what is meant is that the essence can be conceived without the attributes may be intended to render the statement harmless, but it can hardly be thought to succeed. The statement may perhaps reflect al-Ghazālī's contempt for the traditional kalām of the Ashʿarites, who employ *'qāʾimun bi-'* both in speaking of accidents as "subsisting" in their substrates and of God's eternal attributes as "subsisting"

in His essence, though they are always careful to insist that God's existence or essence (*nafs/dhāt = wujūd*) without His eternal attributes is inconceivable (though not identical to His essence, they may not be said to be "other than He") and would never say that they are, or are analogous to, "accidents" (*ʾaʿrāḍ*), though *ʿmaʿnāʾ* is used of both. One would think that given his tendency to espouse the logic and ontology of Avicenna, al-Ghazālī would somewhere feel constrained to make a number of distinctions and to discuss the subject seriously, even if not in detail. He doesn't.

33 So also in the discussion in *Qudsiyyah* (pp. 83f. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 107, 34ff.) he says that this seeing is "a kind of unveiling and knowing, only clearer than [the usual kind] of knowing" (*nawʿu kashfin wa-ʿilmin ʾillā ʾawḍaḥu mina l-ʿilm*); cf. also *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 314, and generally pp. 304ff.

34 Essentially, the same definition is given in *Qudsiyyah* (p. 81, 10ff. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 106, 17ff.); in *Miḥakk*, pp. 45f. and 117, ult., and in *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 39f., he gives *taʾlīf* (composition; being composed) as the proper characteristic of bodies. Concerning this definition in traditional Ashʿarite teaching, see our "Bodies and Atoms: The Ashʿarite Analysis," in *Islamic Theology and Philosophy: Studies in Honor of George F. Hourani*, ed. M. Marmura (Albany, N.Y., 1984), pp. 45ff. (where note that "are formally strict" was dropped by the printer following "predicates" in the second line of p. 49).

35 For the traditional description of water and air, see, e.g., *Hidāyah*, fol. 33v, 9ff. The remarks of al-Anṣārī in *Ghunyah*, fol. 14v, 19ff., look as if they may be intended to respond to al-Ghazālī's concern. Note, in any case, that in traditional Ashʿarite doctrine one may speak of water's having accidents; see, e.g., *Mujarrad*, p. 132, 14ff., and *Ghunyah*, fol. 18v, 22f.

36 Al-Ghazālī never that I have noted speaks of the individual instance of an accident as a "particle" (*juzʾ*), as do the mutakallimūn (e.g., *Shāmil* [69], p. 152, 7, and *Ghunyah*, fol. 9v, 1ff.).

37 See, e.g., *Irshād*, p. 140. Differences of opinion on this question are in large part based on whether or not one holds, with al-Ashʿarī and al-Isfarāʾīnī, that, since 'continues to exist' is not implied by 'exists' or 'is an *x*', perdurance or permanence of existence (*al-baqāʾ*) must be a distinct accident created by God (thus, e.g., al-Isfarāʾīnī, *ʿAqīdah*, §IV, 36, p. 140, and Fr. 20, p. 148 = *Shāmil* [69], pp. 573f.) or, with al-Juwaynī and most authorities after al-Bāqillānī, that it is simply that what exists continue to exist (*istimrār al-wujūd*). Al-Ashʿarī's position is, thus, that the atom ceases to exist when continuation of existence (*baqāʾ*) is not created in it (e.g., *Mujarrad*, pp. 241f. and generally *Sharḥ al-Irshād*, fol. 130r, 18ff.). Al-Ghazālī cites two Ashʿarite positions in *Tahāfut*, pp. 88f.; for detail on the question, see *Ikhtiṣār*, foll. 72v ff., and *Sharḥ al-Irshād*, foll. 124r ff.

38 The focus on the elements of traditional dogma against the usual opponents of traditional manuals likewise excludes any mention or discussion of immaterial beings; see p. 56 below.

39 Reading *ʾajsāmihi* with the edition published in *Darul Funūn Ilahiyat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 8 (1928), p. 93, 10f., for the plainly erroneous *ʾajnāsihi* of the Cairo edition.

40 Again here, he seems to state traditional Ashʿarite teaching, but whether by *ʿʾakwānʾ* he means the whole traditional set (i.e., including contiguity, conjunction, etc.) or only rest and motion and the *kawn* that is unique to the *jawhar* in the first moment it is created, as would seem most likely, is not clear from the evidence of the texts. If he includes only the latter three, then he need not be committed to the traditional atomism in its every detail. The *ʾakwān* will, in any case, entail having position in space.

41 Motions are said to be *mutamāthilah* in *Qudsiyyah*, p. 87, 23f. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 110, 8f. For the usual use of the word, cf., e.g., *Mujarrad*, pp. 209f.

42 He goes on to say that as such the accident does not occupy space but requires a locus. God neither occupies space nor requires a locus: *Iqtiṣād*, p. 24; cp. *Miḥakk*, p. 40, 1f.

43 Reading *mawḍūʿ* for *mawḍiʿ* in lines 12f. Note that by *ʿal-jins al-ʾaʿammʾ* in line 10, he does not mean the most universal of all classes, but only a more universal class; he employs *ʿjinsu l-ʾajnāsʾ* of body on the previous page and of *jawhar* in *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 14, 11. (Note that al-Ghazālī normally follows the usage of kalām, employing *ʿjinsʾ* for 'class' in general rather than following the usage of the falāsifa and distinguishing *ʿnawʿʾ* and *ʿjinsʾ* as 'genus' and 'species'. See, however, *Miḥakk*, p. 105, where he explains the use of *ʿjins al-ʾajnāsʾ*.

44 Cp., e.g., *Tamhīd*, p. 78, 10f. and *Shāmil* (69), p. 141, 8, and p. 159, 13ff. Some Ashʿarites defined the atom in terms of *shaghlu l-ḥayyiz* (*Shāmil*, p. 142, 13ff.), while al-Bāqillānī defined it in terms of *misāḥah* (*Shāmil* [69], 142, 18f.; cp. *Ghunyah*, foll. 14r, 11f., and 18r, 19); some surface area is a property of whatever occupies space and has volume (. . . *lahu misāḥatun wa-hādhā ḥukmu kulli mutaḥayyizi dhī juththatin wa-ḥujm*) (*Ghunyah*, fol. 14r, 11f.). Thus, "the atom occupies the place (*yashghalu l-makān*) in which it resides" (e.g., *Mujarrad*, p. 207, 12) and may be said to fill a place as such and of itself (*yamlaʾu bi-dhātihi makānan*) (*Ghunyah*, fol. 9v, 1ff.); the essential characteristic (*khāṣṣiyyah*) of the *jawhar* is to be a volume (*al-ḥajmiyyah*) (*Ghunyah* fol. 62v, 13). Whatever the differences among the masters, it is taken as axiomatic that every existent *jawhar* is *mutaḥayyiz* (e.g., *Shāmil* [69], pp. 149, 5ff.). According to the traditional conception, thus, *ḥayyiz* is characteristic of the *jawhar* as opposed to the accident (*Shāmil* [69], p. 185, 18f.), as the latter has locus (*maḥall*) but not position in space (*jihah*) (*Ghunyah*, fol. 31v, 21).

45 This is the normal sense of the word; cf., e.g., *Shāmil* (69), p. 141. Al-

Ghazālī does speak of "occupying locations in space" (*al-shaghlu lil-ʾaḥyāz*) in *Tahāfut* (p. 63, 8ff.), where he asks whether or not God could reduce the dimensions of the universe and whether, if He were to do so, the portion of the whole (*al-milāʾ*) "and the occupation of spaces" that no longer existed would be greater with two cubits missing than with only one. Here, however, he is not talking about the *jawāhir* but of the Whole, the dimensions and volume of the universe. In *Qudsiyyah* (p. 83, 11 = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 107, 4) he seems to employ 'position' (*jihah*) as an equivalent of '*ḥayyiz*' (cp. p. 79, 13 = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 104, 25, with p. 82, 4 = 1, p. 106, 13) and says that to have a particular position (*mukhtaṣṣun bi-jihah*) is to have a particular location in space (*ḥayyiz*), as does a *jawhar*. He intends 'position', more narrowly elsewhere, however, (ibid., pp. 82f. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, pp. 106f.), when he takes it as a location in space relative to a human observer, as above, below, etc.

46 That he speaks of divisibility here and not of "composition" (*ʾītilāf, taʾlīf*) follows the lexical program of *Miʿyār*. It is not inconsistent, however, with the conception of body as essentially *muʾallaf*. Previously in the same chapter (p. 170) al-Ghazālī had defined body as "a finite continuum which is measurable in three dimensions" (*muttaṣilun maḥdūdun mamsūḥun fī ʾabʿādin thalāthah*), a definition which would seem to have its immediate source in Avicenna (cf. *Ḥudūd*, p. 87; note the contrasting definition of *Ilāhiyyāt*, p. 61, where, against the mutakallimūn, Avicenna defines body, saying that it is "a single, continuous substance and it is not composed of indivisible parts"). Al-Ghazālī does not explicitly raise the question of whether bodies are or are not infinitely divisible in *Miʿyār* (or, for that matter, elsewhere that I have noted), but his speaking of particles (*ʾajzāʾ*) in some passages would seem to indicate that they are not, so that one could take the two definitions as equivalent insofar as the being conjoined (*muʾtalif*) of the former is understood as equivalent to the being continuous or contiguous (*muttaṣil*) of the latter. In *Qudsiyyah* (p. 82, 12f. = *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 106, 19f.), al-Ghazālī says that bodies always have perceptible characteristics and dimensions (*hayʾah* and *miqdār*).

47 This is, of course, the title of the book, but in the context it stands as al-Ghazālī's description of the elements of Muslim orthodoxy as presented in the school (*madhhab*) with which he associates himself (cf. *Mīzān*, pp. 124ff., discussed below, pp. 96–97); cp. the occurrence of the phrase in *Qudsiyyah*, p. 88, 6 (= *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 110, 19). Note that it is not immediately clear in the present context whether the word '*rūḥ*' is employed, as often in al-Ghazālī's writing (see, e.g., n. 48 immediately below), as a redundant term equivalent to 'soul' or whether he means by it the physical pneuma. That it is the pneuma he means here is, however, clear, from the discussion in *Miḥakk*, pp. 132ff., on which see pp. 59–61 below.

48 Here 'soul' and 'spirit' do not designate two distinct beings or components or aspects of the essential reality of man but are merely two synonyms for the same being, as is clear from the singular subject and predicate of the following phrase. If the soul/spirit is a *jawhar*, and all *jawhars* are located in space, then it could cease to exist only if God withdrew the *ʾakwān* which are the condition of its existence; cf. *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 36, 1ff., and 37, 14f. In *Jawāhir* (p. 16, 1) he describes the body metaphorically as the soul's ship.

49 On the operation of the pneuma, see *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 111f. and more generally concerning the related physiology v. *ibid.*, pp. 109ff.; also cp. *Miḥakk*, pp. 133f. It is plain that here in *Iḥyāʾ* (as he does more explicitly, e.g., in *Miḥakk*, p. 113, and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 34, discussed below, p. 59) al-Ghazālī wishes to assert the existence of another spirit distinct from that recognized by the Ashʿarite mutakallimūn, namely, from the "subtle bodies" (i.e., invisible fluid) associated with corporeal life. According to the traditional doctrine of the school, life is, strictly speaking, an accident which is created in the atoms or particles that make up the pneuma. The life of the visible body (the *jasad*) is associated with the presence of the pneuma which circulates in it. Interpretations of their relationship vary somewhat; cf., e.g., *Mujarrad*, pp. 257; al-Mutawallī, pp. 56f.; *Risāla* 2, p. 106; *Laṭāʾif* 4, p. 39 (ad Q17,85); *Irshād*, p. 377; and generally *Ghunya*, foll. 127r ff. and cp. *al-Muʿtamad*, pp. 94ff. Some thus identify life with the pneuma (e.g., al-Bāqillānī, cited in *Ghunya*, loc. cit.); life belongs to the pneuma (to each of its individual particles or atoms) as an accident, and by its presence in the body the pneuma causes (*mūjib*) the body to be alive (al-Mutawallī, p. 57, where omit the *wāw* in front of *ʾidhā* in line 2). That is, the pneuma is the living component in a material composite that is described by 'alive'. Angels and jinns are also spoken of as having invisible bodies (al-Mutawallī, p. 57).

50 P. 3, 14ff.; see, generally, al-Mutawallī, pp. 3f. and cp., e.g., "*fī qalbi l-ʾinsāni ʿaynun hādhihi ṣifatu kamālihi wa-hiya l-latī yuʿabbaru ʿanhā tārratan bil-ʿaqli wa-tārratan bil-rūḥi wa-tārratan bil-nafsi l-ʾinsānī*) (*Mishkāh*, p. 43, 15f.; cf. also ibid., p. 77, 6f. Regarding the various terms al-Ghazālī employs to refer to the "heart" or rational soul, cf. also *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 299, 24ff., where he says that it is variously called "the divine light" and "the intellect" and "interior insight" (*al-baṣīratu l-bāṭinah*) and "the light of belief and certitude" (*nūru l-ʾīmāni wal-yaqīn*), and goes on to say that one should not be concerned about names since formal terms (*iṣṭilāḥāt*) vary.

51 '*Mufāriq*', which I have rendered "distinct", might equally be translated "separable" or "separate".

52 This statement would seem to exclude one's reading '*sāʾir*' in the previous passage simply as "all" and to confirm its having its proper and more common meaning as we have rendered it. In the formal vocabulary of kalām,

'juz'' normally designates a part as a discrete element in a set of parts, all of which are identical, while *'ba'ḍ'* is used of a part which is one of a set of disparate parts. (Cp. Avicenna's use where he speaks of the *'ajzā'* of the brain: *de Anima,* p. 267, 1.) Al-Ghazālī uses *'juz'*' elsewhere, however, simply in the sense of "part" or "component" (e.g., *Miḥakk,* p. 38, 1 and ult.). Concerning the use of the verb *''adraka, yudriku'* here, cp. *Iḥyā'* 4, p. 303, 21ff., where al-Ghazālī divides the "perceptibles" (*al-mudrakāt*) into those which can be objects of imagination, such as colored bodies, and those which cannot, "such as God's being and whatever is not corporeal, such as cognition, the power to act, volition, etc."

53 Note that he says that it subsists *"fī l-jism,"* not *"bil-jism"*; it does not, that is, subsist in the body in the way that an accident subsists in its substrate.

54 Here too he follows the tradition of the falāsifa. Avicenna says that the first or primary connection (*'awwalu ta'alluq*) of the soul is to the heart (*de Anima,* pp. 263f.), while the acts of some of its faculties (e.g., *al-taṣawwur* and *al-takhayyul*) are carried out in the brain (pp. 266f.).

55 Note that it is the intellect whose *maḥall* is the soul; the soul is an independent entity (a *jawhar*) and does not reside in a subject. Thus Avicenna insists (*al-Nafs al-nāṭiqah,* p. 198, 9f.) that the body is not the locus (*maḥall*) of the soul but rather something that receives it (*qābil*). Al-Ghazālī makes his conception of the rational soul clear enough in *Mīzān,* but for reasons that we shall present later we have preferred to make but limited use of the evidence of that work in our present analysis.

56 He uses 'spirit' (*al-rūḥ*) here instead of 'soul' in order to allude to Q17,85: "They will ask you about the *rūḥ;* say, 'the *rūḥ* is a matter of my Lord's and you have been given but little knowledge'" (cp. the discussion of the rational soul in *Mīzān,* p. 14, 12ff., where the same verse is cited along with Q15,29 = 38,72). There are a number of ways to read (and render) the verse; some exegetes, e.g., al-Qushayrî, an Ash'arite, understand the reference to be to the pneuma (cf. *Laṭā'if,* ad loc.). That by *'rūḥ'* here al-Ghazālī does not mean the pneuma but rather the soul is clear from the context and also from the discussion of *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 54, 20ff., where the verse is quoted and the spirit/heart is described as "something divine" (*'amrun 'ilāhī*); cp. also *Mīzān,* p. 14, 12ff.

57 Here, playing on the expression *'nafs'*, hearing both "self" and "soul". With the assertion that those who know are not allowed to divulge their knowledge publicly, cp. *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 21, 15ff. (cited below, p. 65), pp. 36f., p. 99, 28ff., et alibi. We may note here that parallel to the doctrines contrasted in this passage, he notes in *Mi'yār,* p. 164, that whereas the mutakallimūn hold angels to be "subtle bodies," the falāsifa say that they are immaterial (*ghayr mutaḥayyizah*), but goes on to say that since the correct interpreta-

tion of this dispute requires rigorous, that is to say, logical demonstration (*al-ṭarīq al-burhānī*), he cannot go into the matter here.

58 In *Mīzān* (p. 125) he offers the thesis that God "is not in any place, neither in the world nor outside it nor contiguous to it" as something that most people would misunderstand and refuse to accept.

59 Regarding the ultimate "giver of forms/agent intellect" (which al-Ghazālī often refers to as "the Throne," "the Well Guarded Tablet," etc.), note that he says a few pages later in *Miḥakk* (p. 82) that it is not implausible that in the marvels of God's creation there be a single celestial cause (*fī l-'asbābi l-samāwiyyati sababun wāḥid*) which through the determinate operation of God's custom is "the cause of life in the members and organs of animals and of their various configurations and of the causes of the multiplicity of clouds and of the causes of the mutual enmities between men, which are the causes of battles, which are the causes of bloodshed. The only people who reject such knowledge are the ignorant who have no knowledge at all of the marvels of God's creating and the scope of His power." (The last sentence here—where note again the formal sense of 'creates'—refers to examples of drawing correct conclusions regarding the characteristics of animals and men on the basis of physiognomy, whose causal implications elicit the final statement regarding "a single celestial cause".)

60 That is to say, the act of combining the terms of the syllogism and understanding their formal relation is the cause of the knowledge of the conclusion. In *Qisṭās* (pp. 21f. 23) al-Ghazālī states that the conclusion is *"mutawallid,"* but he does not mean what the Mu'tazila mean in using the same expression. For al-Ghazālī, rather, the act of combining the terms and understanding their formal relation is the occasion given which the knowledge of the conclusion becomes available and is imparted by an extrinsic agent intellect. It should also be noted that al-Ghazālī's former schoolmate, al-Anṣārī, attacks the doctrine of the falāsifa concerning the role of the agent intellect in his *Ghunyah* (fol. 151v, 14ff.).

61 The angelic intelligence of the outermost sphere, however, knows through its own being and essence (*bi-jawharihi wa-dhātihī*) (*Fayṣal,* p. 41, 4; cf. also *Mīzān,* p. 24, 12ff.).

62 Note that, following Avicenna, al-Ghazālī considers existence to be an accident; cf. *Mi'yār,* p. 57, and *Miḥakk,* pp. 105f.

63 So, too, the phrase *"kal-'āriḍi lahū"* in his presentation of the position of the falāsifa in *Iqtiṣād,* p. 215, precisely reflects al-Ghazālī's own position; its relation to the body is like an accident. For the sense of the *'āriḍ* as an enduring property or accident which is apparently permanent in its subject but without which the subject can exist, cf., e.g., *Miḥakk,* p. 26, 9ff., and *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 13f.

64 With this, cp. *Ghunyah,* fol. 150v, 8ff.

65 The soul (*nafs,* pl. most often *nufūs,* as opposed to the "self" or essence: *nafs,* pl. *'anfus*), is not a formal element of the conception of man in classical kalām; cf., e.g., *Mushkil,* pp. 151f. and al-Bayhaqī, *Asmā',* p. 286, 2ff., and the thesis mentioned by al-Ghazālī in *Miḥakk* (p. 133), according to which 'soul' has no distinct, proper referent. '*Nafs*' is sometimes used to name the seat of the emotions (cf., e.g., *Hidāyah,* foll. 116v, 2–4, and 138v, 16f. and *Iḥyā'* 3, p. 4, 2ff.). In traditional religious language the "heart" is the locus of mental acts, and following Q12,15 bad thoughts and actions are often attributed to the *nafs,* while good thoughts and actions are attributed to the *rūḥ* (e.g., al-Sulamī, p. 408, 11ff.; *Risālah* 2, pp. 103ff., and *Laṭā'if* 4, 39, ad Q17, 85, and 6, p. 11, ad Q49,12). (The language here originates in Christian usage; cp., e.g., the use of 'ψυχικός' and 'πνευματικός' in 1 Cor. 2:13–15). In some sufi contexts it is often unclear whether '*nafs*' is used in this sense or whether the self is meant; cf., e.g., al-Sulamī, p. 351, 6 and 14.

66 The terms here are wonderfully ambivalent, as one might easily hear "the most literal and the most true and the most Muslim" as well as a number of more nuanced readings of the separate expressions and the combination of the three. With "*al-'aslam*" here, cp. "*hādhā l-ṭarīqu 'aqrabu 'ilā l-salāmah,*" al-Mutawallī, p. 13, 21.

67 An analogous set of three positions is presented concerning the beatitude of the next life in *Mīzān,* pp. 5f., and concluding with the same advice (pp. 7ff.; cp. Mi'yār, p. 148, 21–23), though there al-Ghazālī indicates somewhat clearly his preference for the third alternative, which he attributes to "the sufis and the metaphysicians among the falāsifa" (i.e., "those falāsifa who believe in God and the last day": p. 12, 8f.).

68 The word is employed by the Ash'arites in a formal sense to refer to God's attributes as distinct from his essence (*dhāt*) and to refer to the accidents of corporeal beings, but it is clear that it is not so used by al-Ghazālī here (*Iḥyā'* 4, p. 478, translated above, p. 56).

69 '*Ayn*' properly designates "*al-shay'u l-mawjūdu l-thābitu l-kā'in*" (*Ghunyah,* fol. 12r, 14f.; cp. *Farq,* p. 332, 5) and as such is employed also of God (e.g., *Mushkil,* pp. 116ff.).

70 It would be fanciful, however, to suggest that because of al-Ghazālī's recognition of the equivocity of '*jawhar*', what he really means when, for example, he defines a body as "a composite of two *jawhars* which occupy space" (*Iqtiṣād,* p. 39) is a composite of matter and form. By "*jawharayn mutaḥayyizayn*" he clearly means two independent, contingent entities ("substances," if you wish), each of which occupies space.

71 Cf., e.g., *Munqidh,* pp. 147 and 161f., and concerning the levels of consciousness or intuition, cp. *Mishkāh,* pp. 80f. True visions (*al-ru'yā l-ṣaḥīḥah*) are given as one of the "forty-six parts of prophecy": *Jawāhir,* p. 29, 1, citing a ḥadīth reported by ibn Ḥanbal and al-Bukhārī and transmitted also by abū 'Alī al-Thaqafī, according to al-Sulamī (pp. 361f.).

72 Al-Ghazālī's discussion of human acts in *Miḥakk,* pp. 88f., is similarly inconclusive.

73 Al-Ghazālī will no doubt explain this along the same lines as does Avicenna (e.g., in *Ishārāt,* pp. 214f.), "*fa'inna li-dhālika fī madhāhibi l-ṭabī'ati 'asbāban ma'lūmah*" (*ibid.,* p. 209, 14f.; see, generally, pp. 209ff.). For the traditional Ash'arite view, cf., e.g., *Mujarrad,* p. 263, 9ff.

74 P. 92, 18ff. = *Iḥyā'* 1, p. 113, 17ff.; a similar statement is made in *Iqtiṣād,* p. 217. Note that he does not suggest here whether this involves merely the restoration of the pneuma to a part of the body or the presence of the rational soul. The question here differs from that of the following section of the work, since the body is presumed to be present so that "life" (in the context, presumably the pneuma) can be present in at least some part of the body at the time of the interrogation. Again, the only assertion al-Ghazālī formally claims to make is that it is theoretically possible that this take place under these circumstances. He in no way commits himself regarding how he conceives the interrogation in fact to take place. The notion of the restoration of the pneuma for the interrogation is traditional; cf., e.g., al-Barbahārī, cited in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah* 2, p. 26.

75 Note that, although for obvious reasons he does not do so here, al-Ghazālī elsewhere carefully distinguishes what lies absolutely in God's power and is therefore hypothetically possible from what is concretely possible given the essential natures of things and God's wisdom and liberality; cf. chap. 2, n. 24.

76 In this connection, note too, for example, the use of the expressions "in act" and "in potency" in speaking of God (p. 61, 3). That al-Ghazālī views the traditional proof for the existence of God as unsatisfactory, see *Iljām,* pp. 78f., where it is described as *rasmiyyah.* Al-Ghazālī does not say explicitly that a fully adequate demonstration of the existence of God must follow that given, e.g., in *Ilāhiyyāt,* pp. 29ff., and *Ishārāt,* pp. 138ff., but that this is his position is indicated in *Qisṭās,* pp. 24f., and its basic terms are formally presented in *Maqṣad,* p. 137 (cited in chap. 2, n. 24).

77 Cp. the dogmatic introductions to al-Qushayrī's *Risālah* and al-Kalābādhī's *Ta'arruf,* which likewise serve as a kind of preliminary apologetic.

78 So, too, his accusation against the scholars and theologians as being more often interested in highly endowed and prestigious chairs is contextually appropriate in that these "impediments to knowledge" violate the canons of the perfection of religious action that he will lay down as the foundation

of higher religious insight (*ḥuṣūlu ʿilm al-ḥaqāʾiq, al-maʿrifatu bi-llāh*). He will say over and again that "this ain't a book on higher speculative theology (*ʿilm al-mukāshafah*). . . ."

4. Open Conflict with the Ashʿarite School

1 Later (p. 67), he speaks of the ignorance of "those who hasten to charge anyone who disagrees with al-Ashʿarī or someone else with unbelief." Al-Ghazālī's intimation that his opponents are moved by envy of his *Iḥyāʾ* is basically polemical and need not be taken as evidence that it was *Iḥyāʾ* alone which provoked the accusations against him. (Hostile reaction to *Iḥyāʾ*, certainly, was ample, as it was condemned in Spain during al-Ghazālī's lifetime, though the anecdote of al-Jazāʾirī concerning *Iḥyāʾ*, quoted by Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought*, p. 133, would seem likely to be based on *Fayṣal*. For a list of early opponents to *Iḥyāʾ*, see Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought*, p. 93). In his detailed study, *The Medieval Islamic Controversy Between Philosophy and Orthodoxy* (Leiden, 1989), Isa Bello failed to see that al-Ghazālī composed *Fayṣal* primarily as an apologetic for his own theology and its *taʾwīl*. Al-Ghazālī did write a work in which he responded more directly to objections against what he says in *Iḥyāʾ*, namely, *al-Imlāʾ fī ishkālāt al-Iḥyāʾ*. This, however, has not been available to me; concerning the contents of the work and the state of the text, see Ormsby, *Theodicy in Islamic Thought*, pp. 75–81. It might be appropriate to suggest here that in view of al-Ghazālī's assurance of the superiority of his own theological insight and so of the status of his *taʾwīl*, it would seem likely that the title of his work on the divine names should be voweled *maqṣid* rather than the usual *maqṣad*, i.e., it is the place one aims to reach, not the aiming at it.

2 In *Munqidh* (p. 134, 7f.) al-Ghazālī speaks, in connection with his own case, of "turning away from status and wealth and [worldly] distractions and attachments." This claim may, however, be a trifle disingenuous; see Joseph van Ess, "Quelques remarques sur le *Munqidh min aḍ-ḍalāl*," in *Ghazālī, la raison et le miracle*, pp. 57–68.

3 The rhetoric of this passage is remarkable; note, e.g., the use of "Inspire" (*ʾalhama*). The reference to the sultans and other men of power who endowed and controlled the schools is a mark of al-Ghazālī's alienation from his erstwhile colleagues. Note too, the resonant connotations acquired by "*dhikrunā*" within the context. In *Munqidh* (pp. 135f.) al-Ghazālī says that he came finally to examine his worldly attachments and realized that he was more devoted to status and fame than to God and was called to break these connections. It is clear from the opening of *Fayṣal*, however, as also from a

number of other works written after his crisis, that modesty was not one of the virtues he came to cultivate.

4 Concerning this, recall that in the section of *Iqtiṣād* (pp. 41–60) in which he treats the anthropomorphic descriptions of God, al-Ghazālī presents the traditional interpretations at relatively disproportionate length while offering only oblique allusions to his own exegesis of them.

5 The five levels (presented pp. 34ff.) are the essential (*al-dhātī*), the sensible (*al-ḥissī*), the imaginary (*al-khayālī*), the intellectual (*al-ʿaqlī*), and the symbolic or figurative (*al-shibhī*). Elsewhere, al-Ghazālī offers somewhat variant lists of the "degrees of existence"; see chap. 4, n. 14.

6 The implications of this exegesis within the context of al-Ghazālī's theology is spelled out, e.g., in *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 246, 8ff. Also see our *Creation and the Cosmic System*, p. 45; the same Tradition is cited in *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 83, 6ff., and in *al-Nafs al-nāṭiqah*, p. 189. Al-Ghazālī's interpretation of God's 'hand' here is conspicuously different from the traditional Ashʿarite interpretations; cf., e.g., *Mushkil*, pp. 153ff. and 224, 5ff.; *Taʾwīl*, foll. 118r f. and 140r f.; *Ikhtiṣār*, fol. 125r f.; also al-Bayhaqī, *Asmāʾ*, p. 319, and *Mujarrad*, p. 214, 11f. (Note that abū Yaʿlā [*al-Muʿtamad*, p. 52, 13ff., §86] condemns two of the common Ashʿarite interpretations, but not that according to which 'hand' refers to God's Self or essence; cf., e.g., *Mushkil* and *al-Bayhaqī*, locc. citt.). Al-Ghazālī associates God's hand with the angel of the first sphere in *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 246, 8ff.

7 It is noteworthy that in this apologetic context he cites *Qisṭās*, a work in which he had presented Aristotelian logic in a form and language so adapted as to make it acceptable to the *ʿulamāʾ*, and not *Miʿyār*, in which he presented it using the lexicon of the falāsifa, and *Miḥakk*, in which the elements are presented in his own language but in a way that is openly critical of the school tradition.

8 For the language, cf., e.g., al-Isfarāʾīnī's, *ʿaqīdah*, pp. 135f., translated in our "Knowledge and *Taqlīd*," pp. 50f. Al-Ghazālī will claim, however, to speak from a superior vantage point, since he holds (*Munqidh*, pp. 94f.) that the mutakallimūn are incapable of presenting an adequate apologetic against the falāsifa (and this may be one reason that he offers none in *Iqtiṣād*). Note also, however, that his polemic ignores the basic position of the school, in that for them the reasoning presented in the Koran and Tradition are sufficient for most ordinary people.

9 Concerning "the deeper truths of the religious sciences" and "the ultimate limits of doctrinal systems," see *Mīzān*, pp. 124ff., discussed on pp. 96–97 below. The phrase "whose minds are not solidly grounded in the sciences" is clearly a paraphrasis for "those who are not *rāsikhūna fī l-ʿilm*."

10 There are in the Koran symbolic metaphors (*istiʿārāt rasmiyyah*) for those who are able to see them: *Jawāhir*, p. 28.

11 "*Nūr al-nubuwwah*" means a special kind of direct inspiration by the agent intellect. In a later context (p. 102, 1) this prophetic light is distinguished from the intellectual light (*nūr al-ʿaql*) which comes about after long years of intellectual research (*baḥth*). In *Mishkāh* (pp. 51f. and 77) the former is termed "the holy, prophetic spirit" (*al-rūḥu l-qudsiyyu l-nabawī*) and the latter "the intellectual spirit" (*al-rūḥu l-ʿaqlī*).

12 He makes an exception (p. 95) for disputation (*al-munāẓarah*) as a form of research in juridical matters, citing *Qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid.* Does his constant condemnation of academic disputation on theological matters indicate perhaps that al-Ghazālī had suffered some unpleasant experiences in this regard?

13 In *Jawāhir,* where he had no apologetic aims, al-Ghazālī says (pp. 29f.) that there are many *rumūz* in the Koran and the Traditions and (p. 32) that the truth is presented in the Koran "in the form of imaginative metaphors" (*fī qālabi l-ʾamthāli l-khiyāliyyah*); the interpretation of such figures (*al-taʾwīl*) is analogous to dream interpretation (ibid., p. 31, 1–3).

14 The same four degrees of being are presented also in *Mustaṣfā* 1, pp. 21f.; the first three are mentioned also in *Miʿyār* (pp. 38f.) and briefly again in *Maqṣad* (p. 18), where the same expressions are used (*al-wujūd fī l-ʾaʿyān*, *al-wujūd fī l-ʾadhhān* , *al-wujūd fī l-lisān*); later in the same work (pp. 115f.) he speaks of the various *rutab* or *darajāt* of beings as ranks or levels of beings (*mawjūdāt*), specifically of the sensible and intelligible, with implicit allusion to Q40,15. In *Iḥyāʾ* 3, p. 20, 3ff., he distinguishes four levels or modes of existence (*ʾarbaʿu darajātin fī l-wujūd*) belonging to the universe; according to this classification, the highest level is contained in the Well Guarded Tablet, the first created intellect. Differences in the lists presented are due to the aims and requirements of the various contexts. Al-Ghazālī's intention here in *Iljām* would appear to be, in part at least, to escape the Ḥanbalite condemnation of the distinction between *al-qirāʾah* and *al-maqrūʾ* as traditionally it was formulated (cf., e.g., *al-Muʿtamad,* pp. 88f. and 192, 1ff.). In *Iqtiṣād* (pp. 126f.), as is to be expected in view of the context, he simply presents the usual distinction in its usual terms.

15 He mentions, thus, God's "form" (pp. 56 and 98), His "hand(s)" (pp. 55 and 105), "the descent" (pp. 57f.), His "being above" (pp. 58 and 68), and "ascending the Throne" (pp. 65, 68f. and 75), though he offers his interpretation only of the last (pp. 68f.).

16 Note, however, that the attack on the obligation to rational inquiry and a presentation of the different levels of religious assent do occur also in *Fayṣal* (pp. 67ff.).

17 The argument concerning "is eternal and uncreated" certainly avoids the reasoning of abū Yaʿlā against the traditional Ashʿarite distinction (*Muʿtamad,* §156, pp. 88f.), but this is secondary to al-Ghazālī's purpose of

setting the distinction within the context of a broader ontology than that current in the schools. So too, the remarks about collecting such Traditions (p. 75f.; cp. p. 97, 14ff.) may, as the editor suggests, be directed against ibn Khuzayma. He and al-Sibghī are explicitly attacked by ibn Fūrak (*Mushkil,* pp. 181ff., 189ff., and 216ff.). Abū Yaʿlā condemns the distinction between *al-qirāʾah* and *al-maqrūʾ* (*al-tilāwah* and *al-matlūw*) (*al-Muʿtamad,* pp. 88 and 192, 4ff.), identifying those who hold it as "*al-lafẓiyyah*" (p. 267, 8) and calling them unbelievers. "The *lafẓiyyah*" is an old epithet originally applied by the Ḥanbalites and some other traditionalists to those who held that the voicing (*lafẓ*) of the Koran in recitation was something created and therefore distinct from God's eternal speaking; it continued in use as a pejorative for any who made the equivalent distinction, whatever the terminology. See our "Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ashʿarî," *Le Muséon* 104 (1991), pp. 175 and 179f. and the references there cited.

18 Cf. also the passage in which he says that, if need be, in order to take one's mind off the question of what these metaphors mean, one should take up reading the Koran or the study of lexicography or of grammar or calligraphy or medicine or religious law (*fiqh*), and goes on to say that it is better to distract one's self even with play and fun than to attempt to interpret them (p. 77).

19 Cp. *Iḥyāʾ* 1, p. 99, 3ff., where he says that kalām is good for apologetic, "but there is no key for ending difficulties and for the disclosure of the essential realities and the knowledge of things as they really are and the perception of the primary truths which are presented in translation in the literal sense of the expressions of the Muslim creed (*al-ʾasrāru l-latī yatarjimuhā ẓāhiru ʾalfāẓi hādhihi l-ʿaqīdah*) except rigorous campaigning, the suppression of the appetites . . . and holding fast to thought that is free of the contaminations of disputation. . . ." On turning "the face towards God," cf. p. 60, translated in Landholt, "al-Ghazālī," p. 61.

20 They are *rasmiyyah* (pp. 79, 3, and 116, 2) and *wahmiyyah* (p. 112, 8). The reasoning of the mutakallimūn, like that of the fuqahāʾ, employs premises that are founded simply in commonly accepted opinions (*mashhūrāt*): *Miḥakk,* p. 56, and *Mustaṣfā* 1, p. 48 ult.; cp. *Fayṣal,* pp. 69, 9f., 70, 2ff.; see chap. 2, n. 18, above.

21 Some people on hearing the *taʾwīl* of "spiritual meanings involving the immaterial realm (*al-maʿānī l-rūḥāniyyatu l-malakūtiyyah*) set forth in ordinary language become so confused that their basic assent to the truth is corrupted; they do not believe the elementary truth and not only fail to gain spiritual insight but lose even simple belief (*ʾīmānu l-ʿawāmm*) (*Jawāhir,* p. 36).

22 As we have seen, '*al-istiwāʾ*' for al-Ghazālī designates God's governance

of the universe through the outermost sphere; *al-qadar* he associates with the determinant occurrence of sublunary events through the operation of the "universal, enduring causes," celestial and terrestrial; cf. *Iḥyāʾ* 4, p. 94, 8; *Maqṣad*, p. 98, 14ff.; and *Arbaʿīn*, p. 11.

23 Much of what al-Ghazālī says in all of this is paralleled in *Ilāhiyyāt*, pp. 442f. (= *Najāh*, p. 305).

5. Conclusions

1 The sufis' habitual caution in speaking about their experience, which al-Ghazālī occasionally claims as a precedent for his own rather frequent refusal to state his position forthrightly, is really somewhat different in that theirs has to do with the individual's claim to have achieved union with the divine essence, while al-Ghazālī's has to do with his claims for theological truth and insight into the ultimate nature of things and the order of the universe.

2 The ambivalence of the passage when the work was first published would have been extremely misleading, for, while anyone who has read *Iḥyāʾ*, *Maqṣad*, and *Mishkāh*, for example, will know at once exactly what al-Ghazālī means by "the usual course of God's custom," the works published before *Miʿyār* supply no such clear context of interpretation.

3 Cf., e.g., *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 86f. and 249f. (translated in our *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 25f.). The statements are subtly nuanced, as he insists that "conditions" do not "cause existence," where "cause existence" (*al-ʾījād*) is identified with "create" (*al-ikhtirāʿ*), whose formal sense in al-Ghazālī's usage has been noted on p. 37 and chap. 2, n. 43.

4 Concerning the chronology of his works, see G. F. Hourani, "A Revised Chronology of al-Ghazālī's Writings," *JAOS* 104 (1984), pp. 281ff.

5 That there are other theses that he rejects as in some way subordinate to those he refutes, cf., e.g., *Munqidh*, pp. 105f.

6 See chap. 3, n. 8, above; for the formulation, cp. *Ilāhiyyāt*, p. 403, 14f. (= *Najāh*, p. 275, 2).

7 Earlier (e.g., pp. 16 and 18ff.), where he claimed to "make up" his own formal terms, one finds that they are the same as those of Avicenna!

8 For the date of the work, see W. Madelung, "Ar-Rāġib al-Iṣfahānī und die Ethik al-Ġazālīs," in *Islamwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen Fritz Meier zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. R. Gramlich (Wiesbaden, 1974), pp. 153f. (reprinted in W. Madelung, *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam* [London, 1958]), and Hourani, "A Revised Chronology," pp. 294f. Relative to the dating of *Mīzān*, it is not insignificant perhaps that in it al-Ghazālī speaks several times

of the necessity of terminating all worldly connections (e.g., p. 26); cp. *Munqidh*, p. 134, cited in chap. 4, n. 2, above.

9 By "a permanent habitus in the soul" (*malakatun thābitatun fī l-nafs*) al-Ghazālī apparently means a state in which one's certitude concerning God's creation and governance of the world no longer requires that he constantly avert to the demonstration and its terms. This is a different level of certitude from that which is not separable from the demonstration and is different in kind from the certitude derived from contemplative vision. It is analogous to the "*ʿayn al-yaqīn*" of the sufis (cf., e.g., *Risālah* 2, pp. 99f.). See our "Al-Ghazālī on *Taqlîd*," pp. 217f. and the references there cited.

10 It is interesting to note that the thesis that God is neither within the world nor outside it is a standard thesis with the Ashʿarites; cf., e.g., al-Isfarāʾīnī, Fr. 29, pp. 150f.

11 The three levels of assent to the traditional descriptions of the "punishment of the grave" put forth in *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 484f. are basically analogous to the three levels of discourse presented in *Mīzān*.

12 The title of the second book of *Iḥyāʾ* is also *Qawāʾid al-ʿaqāʾid*, but it seems altogether implausible that this have been the work envisioned in *Tahāfut*.

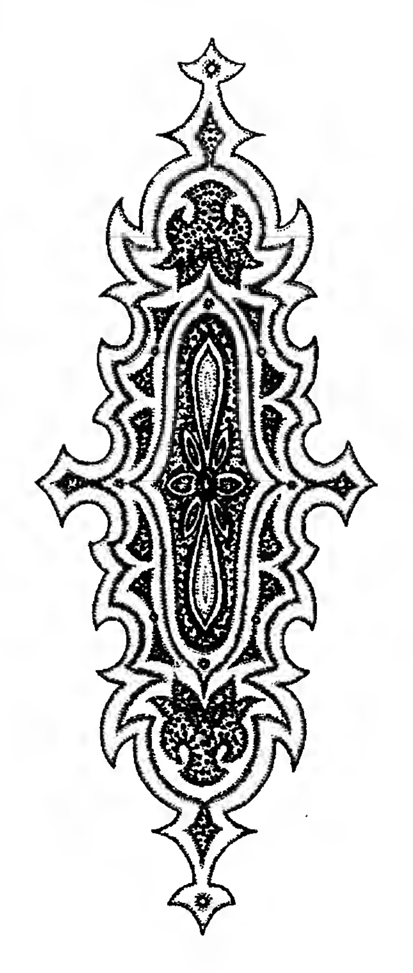
13 *Mustaẓhirī*, written against the claims of the Bāṭiniyya concerning the necessity of an infallible imam, was evidently composed between *Miʿyār* and *Iqtiṣād*; see Hourani, "A Revised Chronology," p. 293.

14 It may be that al-Ghazālī came later to feel that he might have gone a bit too far in what he had implied (or seemed to imply) concerning the resurrection in *Miḥakk* and *Mīzān*, for he seems later to back off somewhat in the general direction of a more traditional position; cf., e.g., *Munqidh*, pp. 106f. along with *Iḥyāʾ* 4, pp. 477f. and 484f., cited above, pp. 57f. and 65f. Did he, in fact, ever come to a definitive conclusion on the matter?

15 It is to be noted that *Iḥyāʾ* can be seen as taking up, in a vastly extended manner, the topic of *Mīzān*, as he states over and again throughout the work that it is properly and most strictly concerned with "the sciences of action" (*ʿulūm al-muʿāmalah*). Again, where earlier *Miʿyār* and *Miḥakk* had served, so to speak, as the logical propaedeutic to *Mīzān*, logic is mentioned in Book II of *Iḥyāʾ* as a science common to falsafa and kalām, and with them is summarily set aside to be taken up more substantially only later in Book XXI in connection with the "science of the states of the soul," where its importance is argued rhetorically through metaphor and in strongly religious language. Logic, thus, is viewed as the key for the soul's initial access to the immaterial world and the perception of the true realities or essences of things (*ḥaqāʾiq al-ʾashyāʾ*). It is worth remarking that although it was

extremely common for the leading scholars to produce short manuals of elementary doctrine (e.g., the *ʿaqīdah* of al-Isfarāʾīnī, the *Fuṣūl* of al-Qushayrī, the *Lumaʿ* of al-Juwaynī), *Qudsiyyah* takes on a peculiar interest of its own because of its placement within the larger context of *Iḥyāʾ*.

16 One of the most important of these is that of the ontological origin of the "essential natures of things." He must have been aware of the problem, since it is dealt with, even if only superficially, by the earlier Ashʿarites (see our *Creation and the Cosmic System*, pp. 52ff.); he says nothing on the topic, however, not even to acknowledge that there may be such a question.



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Arbaʿīn	al-Ghazālī, *K. al-Arabaʿīn fī uṣūl al-dīn*. Cairo, 1344/1925.
al-Baghdādī	ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*. Istanbul, 1346/1928.
al-Bayhaqī	abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī, *al-Asmāʾ wal-ṣifāt*, ed. M. Z. al-Kawtharī. Cairo, 1358.
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de Anima	*Avicenna's de Anima*, ed. F. Rahman. London, 1959.

Farq	ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq,* ed. M. M. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Cairo, n.d.
Fayṣal	al-Ghazālī, *Fayṣal al-tafriqah*. Cairo, 1319/1901.
Fuṣūl	abū l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, *al-Fuṣūl fī l-uṣūl,* ed. R. M. Frank, in *MIDEO* 16 (1983), pp. 59–94.
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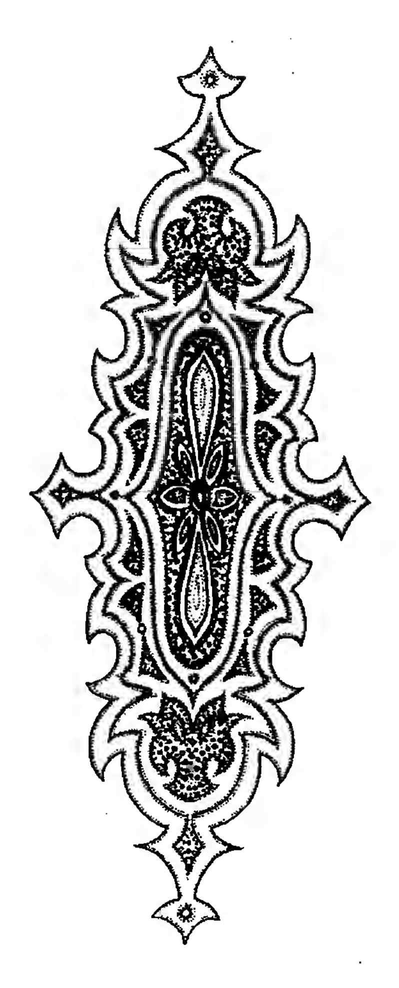
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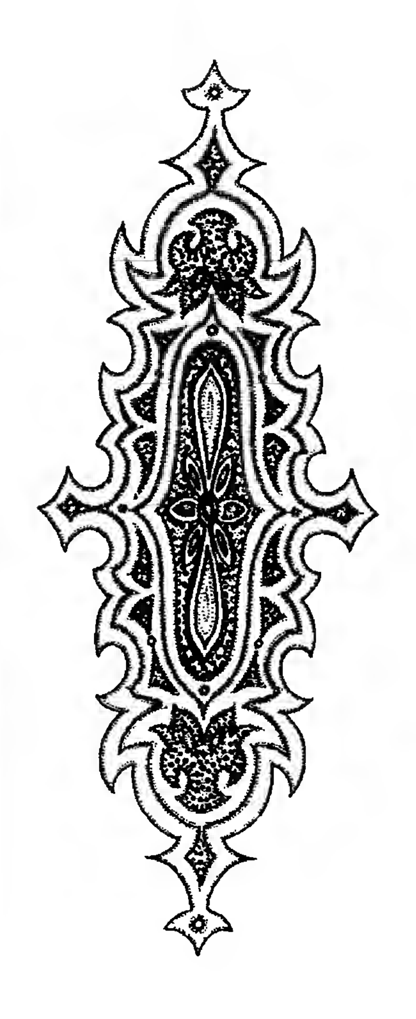
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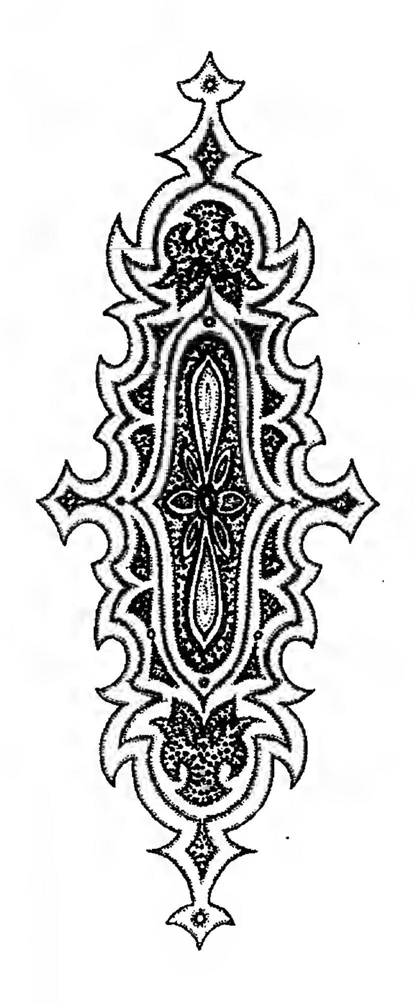
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